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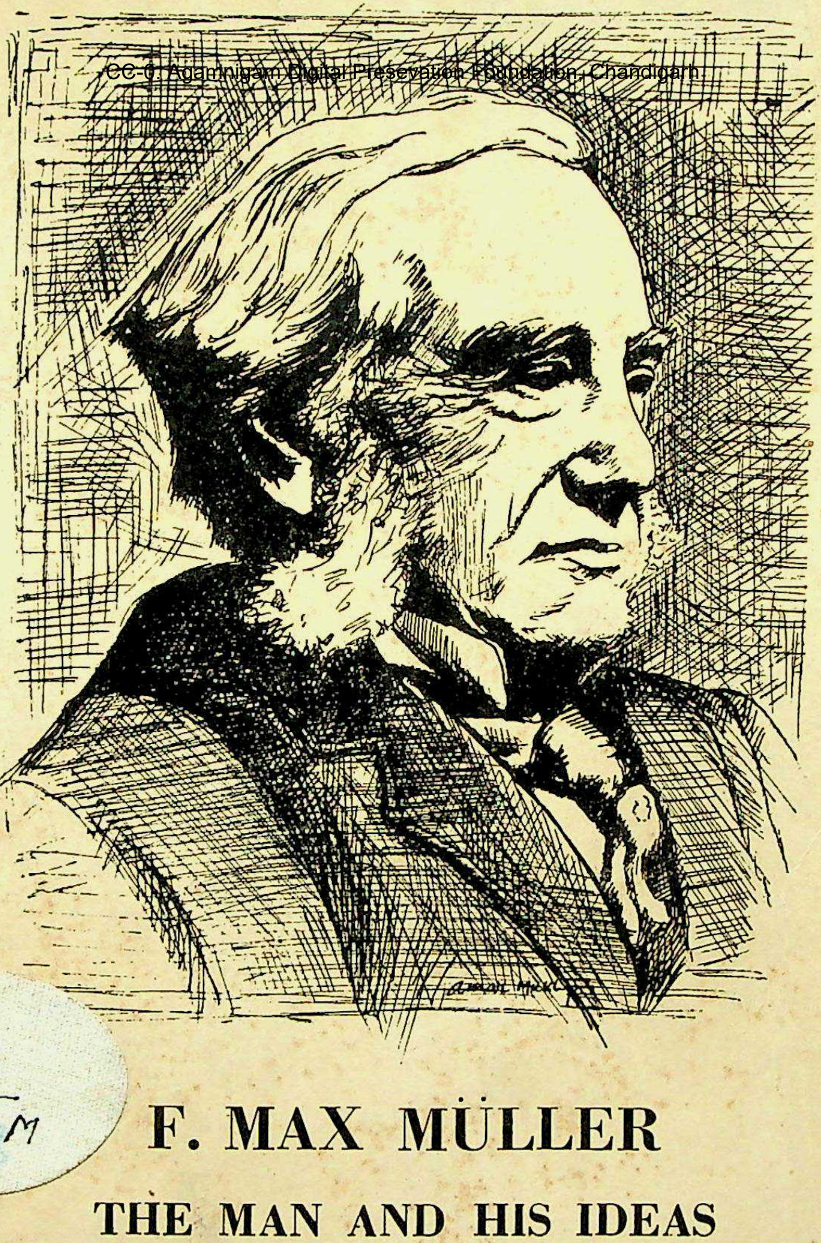

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F. MAX MÜLLER

THE MAN AND HIS IDEAS

FIRMA K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY
CALCUTTA : : 1967

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MAX MUELLER

THE MAN AND HIS IDEAS

By

JOHANNES H. VOIGT

FIRMA K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY
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PREFACE

This book combines the results of some occasional studies on the life and ideas of one of the greatest scholars of Indology in the 19th century : Friedrich Max Mueller. It has been attempted to produce in a comprehensive form these essays which have already been published, or prepared for publication :

1. "Max Mueller's Political Thought" (in : 1965 Year Book, Max Mueller Bhavan Publications, New Delhi, 1965)
2. "Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Theodor Mommsen und Max Mueller ueber den Burenkrieg" (in : Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, 1966, February issue)
3. "Friedrich Max Mueller und die Schleswig-Holstein-Frage in den deutsch-englischen Beziehungen" (in : Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft fuer Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte, 1966)
4. Biographical Sketch of Friedrich Max Mueller (to be published in the Schleswig-Holstein biographical dictionary)
5. The talk on "Max Mueller's Ideas on Science and Religion", given in the Sanskrit Department of the Rajastan University, Jaipur, on 17 September 1966, was published in *Transition* (ed. by Arup K. Datta), No. 3, Oct.-Dec. 1966, pp. 9-16.

This publication is no more than a preliminary sketch of the ideas of a scholar, who never saw India, which he studied in its literature and religions and which he loved. Still, he was not the academician isolated in an ivory tower, hidden behind books and concerned with the past only. This booklet, it is hoped, will reveal the intense concern of Max Mueller with present-day politics in Europe and India.

As his contemporary Theodor Mommsen, the historian of Ancient Rome, Max Mueller was a liberal to the core, who regarded it his responsibility to give his judgment on the political problems of his times, unconcerned with the repercussions which his frank utterances might have for his personal position. Both of them, Max Mueller and Theodor Mommsen, tried to influence politics in Europe through speeches and writings, once they had recognized the dangerous direction into which matters were drifting.

With regard to India, Max Mueller became a solid friend of all Indian nationalists, who struggled for a greater Indian share in the government of their country and ultimately for self-government. Max Mueller believed that the British system was flexible enough as to allow a gradual development from an absolutely governed dependency to a self-ruling community within the frame-work of the British Empire. There is no point of blaming him : his was the view of the majority of the politically conscious Indians in the latter decades of the 19th century.

With regard to Max Mueller's ideas on science and religion, no attempt has been made in this book to enumerate and evaluate the contributions of his in the fields of linguistics, literary history, and comparative religions. To lay bare the basic motives that led him to the study of philology, to his research on the Rigveda, and to the comparative study of religions, and the conclusions at which he finally arrived, were the objects of this investigation. It has been conducted from the assumption that all intellectual endeavour, even that of the most "abstract" nature is stimulated by some inner urge and directed by personal inclinations that are not at first sight apparent, but can be detected, when searched for.

The Max Mueller Papers, deposited at the Bodleian Library, the Gladstone Papers at the British Museum, and the Klaus

Groth Papers at the Kiel Landesbibliothek provided the most useful source-material of Max Mueller's correspondence. My thanks are due to the ladies and gentlemen who assisted me in tracing and making use of this documentary evidence. I am, moreover, greatly indebted to Mr. J. H. Max-Mueller for the information which he rendered on his grandfather and his family's history, as well as for his kindness in making the Max Mueller Papers accessible for study by depositing them at the Bodleian Library.

This booklet was put into its present shape during a study tour to India, which was supported by St. Antony's College, Oxford. An encouragement in studying Max Mueller's life and ideas has been the invitation of the Goethe Institute, Munich, to deliver lectures on the subjects at the Max Mueller Bhavans in India and at Indian centres interested in them.

Without the help of my wife, this booklet would never have seen the light of the day. She helped me in the collection of material and prepared the manuscript for the press.

New Delhi, 30 September 1966

Johannes H. Voigt

INTRODUCTION

SKETCH OF MAX MUELLER'S ACADEMIC CAREER

Friedrich Max Mueller was born on 6 December 1823 in Dessau, the capital of the small Duchy Anhalt-Dessau in central Germany. His father, Wilhelm Mueller, was a distinguished poet, who was, and still is known as "Griechen-Mueller" ("Greek-Mueller") because of his famous Greek Songs, which he had written in support of the Greeks' struggle for national freedom at the beginning of the 19th century. Besides being the "Byron" of Germany, Wilhelm Mueller had written many poems and sets of poems which were set to music by Franz Schubert, and have since become part of the cultural heritage of all Germans.

When his father died at the age of 33, Max Mueller was 4 years old. But the young genius of his father, who had fascinated the German nation with poems and songs, remained an example to him throughout his life. In 1868 Max Mueller wrote on the Greek Songs of his father as follows: "It is astonishing how a young man in a small isolated town like Dessau, almost shut out from intercourse with the great world, could have followed step by step the events of the Greek revolution, seizing on all the right, the beauty, the grandeur of the struggle, making himself acquainted with the dominant characters whilst he at the same time mastered the peculiar local colouring of the passing events."[1] What Max Mueller wrote on his father's enthusiasm for the Greek people—his marvellous penetration into the Greek mind and soul, without ever having visited the country—was in no less degree true in the case of Max Mueller himself with regard to India, a country which he never visited, but the spirit and soul of which he captured and described in such a striking way as few foreigners have ever done before or after him.

Max Mueller's early love of poetry and his inclination to become a musician and composer, find an explanation in the atmosphere of poetry and music that filled his parental home. It may be incidentally remarked that his Christian name Max was that of the hero in the romantic opera "Der Freischuetz" by Carl Maria von Weber, who was Max Mueller's godfather.

Max Mueller's mother, Adelheid, was the daughter of Ludwig von Basedow, Prime Minister in the Duchy Anhalt-Dessau, whose father had been a famous German pedagogue. Bereft of his father at the age of four, Max Mueller came under the influence of his grandfather and as a child became instilled with the atmosphere of court at Dessau. This influence may have been responsible for Max Mueller's later attachment to royalties and courtly surroundings.

Discouraged by the composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy to take up music as a profession, Max Mueller chose the academic line as the second-best choice. He studied at Leipzig University classical philology and Sanskrit under Hermann Brockhaus. In 1843, he got his doctorate in philosophy, but he did not regard his studies as completed. He continued to work on philological and philosophical subjects in Berlin under Franz Bopp and Friedrich von Schelling. In Paris, Eugene Burnouf stimulated him to publish the Rigveda.

In the execution of this grand and ambitious plan, he went to England for the first time in 1846. Two years later he settled down at Oxford. As a means of subsistence, Max Mueller accepted in 1850 the post of Deputy Taylorian Professor of European Languages at Oxford University, and in 1854 the Taylorian professorship. He was a candidate for the Boden professorship of Sanskrit in 1860. Although he was the most promising candidate, the University Convocation did not elect him. His views on Christianity did not conform with the dominant trends of Oxford theology; they were said to have been moulded by German rationalism. Moreover, his views on politics were looked upon as too liberal. Oxford University offered him some consolation by creating for him a chair of comparative philology, which he occupied till 1875.

His teaching at Oxford was interrupted only in 1872, when he went to Strassburg University as a visiting professor for the summer-term. It was a probe into the atmosphere of a German university and into the social and intellectual life of the newly founded Reich. Max Mueller decided to spend the rest of his life in Oxford. After his retirement in 1875, he started with the gigantic project of the publication of the *Sacred Books of the East.* His scholarly and literary productivity seemed to increase with his retirement, as can be seen from the selected bibliography of his works.

Max Mueller's intellectual development may be divided into two periods : a "philological", dating from the start on the Rigveda edition till 1873, and a second phase in which the study of comparative religions overshadowed everything else. This later period lasted till the end of his life.

Throughout his life, Max Mueller took a lively interest in politics, and, to some extent, became active in his own way. In this field too, different phases are discernible. From his arrival in England till 1871, he was concerned with German politics : the Schleswig-Holstein Question and the unification of Germany. The optimism, that characterized this early phase, gave way to a critical attitude, and eventually, a pessimism as to Germany's internal development.

In the course of the seventies of the 19th century, Max Mueller's attention was drawn to the Indian reform movements. Politically, he pleaded for a greater say of Indians in the rule of the Indian Empire.

Max Mueller was married to Georgina Adelaide Riversdale Grenfell, an English lady, who helped him greatly to adjust to the English environment.

1. Max Mueller "Wilhelm Mueller" in preface to Wilhelm Mueller's poems, published in : *Bibliothek der Deutschen Nationalliteratur des 18, und 19, Jahrhunderts,* Leipzig 1868, reprinted in : *Chips from a German Workshop,* vol. iii, New York 1885, p. 107.

> "We are trustees of the greatest treasures which the human race has accumulated by centuries of toil and travail, and it is our duty to keep these treasures safe, and to augment them, if we can, by hard and honest work. Whoever is without this consciousness of the high dignity of a scholar's calling, does not belong to our brotherhood. Let the world call us pedants by all means—we know how to glory in our shame."
> (F. Max Mueller, *Biographies of Words and the Home of the Aryas,* new edition, London 1905, p. 266)

CHAPTER I

MAX MUELLER'S IDEAS ON SCIENCE, RELIGION AND HISTORY

Friedrich Max Mueller was a scholar who took to his vocation with a zeal that was extraordinary. Once he had made up his mind not to take up music as his profession but to choose the academic line, he made scholarship an inner part of himself, and an integral part of his life. He became a scholar not only by profession but by outlook and attitude. His abundant writings on linguistics and on the study of comparative religions and mythology are not explicable without his complete identification with his work.

We would go wrong, however, if we assumed that Max Mueller was an outstanding scholar and nothing else. He never neglected his early developed love of music, nor his interest in politics, that dated back to his student years in Leipzig and Berlin. His sense of music gave a charm of beauty to everything that he said and wrote, and his concern for politics equipped him with a lasting sense of public responsibility. He was not the man to hide himself in an "ivory-tower", the symbol of a scholar's non-concern with worldly affairs. In his days his name was not only known in academic circles but familiar to people who belonged to the so-called society. In a long obituary notice, *The Times* wrote of him: "Society talked of Max Mueller's lectures. They were part of the staple of conversation at dinner tables."[1]

Such a popular success did not come as a gift of the gods. It was one of his basic convictions that a scholar had, besides doing research, the responsibility to spread it to as many people as possible. The results of research should not be confined to a group of experts; they were to be made common property of the whole society, and, indeed, of all mankind. With a missionary zeal did he convey his newly discovered knowledge to a wider public, in lectures, speeches, articles and books. Such a conception of the task of a scholar was, in those days, bound to make him highly suspect in all quarters of academic life. He could not escape the reproach of shallowness; even the broad-minded and well-meaning *Times* expressed the view that Max Mueller had had to pay a price for his popularity; for a popularizing lecturer "must have an eye for effect and stoop to the level of the audience".[2]

By 1900, the open-mindedness of an American was needed to give due credit to popularizing efforts. A. V. Williams Jackson wrote in an obituary notice on Max Mueller's ambition to spread his discoveries: "The office of a popularizer is a sacred calling; and when we have one who proves himself to be a scholar of the highest attainments, let us rejoice in this 'combination and form indeed'."[3]

It seems to be futile and, indeed, unfair to lay a blame on Max Mueller for his desire to spread knowledge amongst his contemporaries. The very nature of his scientific outlook, his concern for contemporary philosophical problems made popularizing not only an appropriate, but a necessary endeavour. By it, he hoped to stem the flood of those new ideas that shook the basis of Christianity and the hitherto prevalent image of man and nature; particularly Darwin, Haeckel and Strauss were for him the enemies who had to be opposed.

Besides detailed and minute linguistic investigations, Max Mueller never lost sight of the effect of their results. What made Max Mueller great was his continuous awareness of the relative importance of a detailed discovery on the entire cosmos of learning, and, in fact, on man's position in the world. Max Mueller's turn towards comparative religions and mythology in the second part of his academic career, may be taken as evidence for the attraction that the great questions of human life and history exercised on his mind. Max Mueller was a scholar, who, by research in linguistics, religions and mythology, hoped to contribute to the solution of some problems that had, ever since the beginning of philosophical reflection, occupied great thinkers of the world. The philosophical trend in him, noticeable at an early stage in his academic career, increased until it preoccupied his mind in the last decades of his life. The philosopher in him had, though generally imperceptible to the casual observer, the upper-hand over the philologist. The defeat in the elections to the Boden Professorship of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1860 may have been an important cause to direct his attention to the more general questions of science, religion, and human development. But this explanation alone does not suffice. The particular event of 1860 may have increased his inclinations for his future course of thought; but it does not explain it. There are other reasons, a combination of which may have decided the issue.

Max Mueller had started his academic career with a keen interest in philosophy, in which field he got his doctorate in 1843 at Leipzig University for the thesis "On the Third Book of Spinoza's Ethics, Re Affectibus." The very inception of his linguistic studies was motivated by philosophical reasons. Attending the lectures of Schelling at Berlin, he had expressed his doubts as to the statements of the old philosopher on the ancient religions of the East. More doubts did he develop when, in a discussion with Schopenhauer at Frankfurt, the latter told him that the Upanishads, on which he had based all his philosophy, was the only important portion of the Veda, that deserved to be studied, whereas the rest was nothing but priestly rubbish.[4] This condemnation seemed unwarranted to Max Mueller, and he decided to prove that Schopenhauer was wrong and he took up the study and publication of the Rigveda, which should take him more than 25 years.—Thus it is clear that for Max Mueller, right from the beginning, philology was, in spite of the importance attached to it by him, really not more than secondary. It was, in other words, a tool for the solution of philosophical problems, or an *ancilla philosophiae*—a maid servant of philosophy—or even of history.[5]

Once he had set out on the path of philosophical reflections, he became exposed to the none too soft atmosphere of philosophical life in the second half of the 19th century. He was not spared of attacks and was at different times forced to adjust his position, when he found his formerly occupied one untenable. Therefore, after he had started as a philosopher, he was compelled to stick to this line and go his road to the very end. Still, there is one more reason for his pre-occupation with philosophy : his religious drive. Not denying the trends of his times, nor the claims of science, but, on the contrary, accepting them in their fullest weight, he aimed at closing the gap between religion and science.

Gifted with the vision of an artist and the determination of an architect, Max Mueller erected an impressive structure of thought, laying its foundation with his Rigveda research (1849-73) constructing upon it his "Science of Language" (1861-63), his "Science of Mythology", the "Science of Religion", dividing his studies of religion into those of "Natural Religion" (1889), "Physical Religion" (1891), "Anthropological Religion" (1892), and "Theosophy, or Psychological Religion" (1893). He completed the structure with "Six Systems of Indian Philosophy" (1899), returning to the very problem which he had discussed with Schopenhauer and trying to give a conclusive answer, after a life-long study, to the questions raised at the beginning of his career. The different "philosophical" phases are, of course, interwoven, but the above interpretation and sequence reflect roughly Max Mueller's own concept of his work.[6] In the following, an attempt will be made to look into the basic tenets of Max Mueller's thoughts on science, religion and history. His works and letters may help to discover those ideas that moulded the man in his development and explain his attitude towards the problems of his contemporary world.

1. *The "Aryan" Problem*

Max Mueller believed that comparative philology was a method by which it was possible to probe deep into man's history and reveal much of his origin. To discover "one of the earliest and most important links in the history of mankind" was an early scholarly ambition of his.[7] Comparative philology, as developed by Franz Bopp and other German scholars, had, firstly, resulted in the discovery of more or less close relationships of all the so-called Indo-European languages, and, secondly, in the assumption of an *"Ursprache,"* an original language, common to all members of this language-group. As Sanskrit was the oldest known of the Indo-European languages, Max Mueller was confident that a study of it would broaden man's knowledge of the Indo-European ancestors who, he thought, had spoken a common language. Max Mueller used to call these assumed ancestors by the Sanskrit term *Aryans* (Sanskrit, meaning the "noble"), the name of the invaders who came to India between 1500 and 1200 B.C. ; Max Mueller extended the precisely defined term "Aryan" to the unknown people who spoke the assumed Indo-European *Ursprache.*

Quite in line with this view was that he regarded the later developing languages as the off-spring of the Aryan group.[8] "Greece and India", he held in 1859, "are, indeed, the two opposite poles in the historical development of the Aryan man."[9] There is no denial that Max Mueller, at this stage of his career, had the idea of a common origin of all people belonging to the Indo-European language group. "There was a time", he wrote in 1853, "when the ancestors of the Greeks and Italians, the Persians and the Hindus, were living together beneath the same roof, separate from the ancestors of the Semitic and Turanian races."[10] The assumption of co-habitation can only mean that

Max Mueller held linguistic groups and ethnic groups to be identical. The dangerous twist that Max Mueller gave to the racial connotation of the word "Aryan" consisted in implying their superiority over those groups that he called "Semitic and Turanian races." He described the "racial superiority" of the Aryans thus: "The Aryan nations, who pursued a northwesterly direction, stand before us in history as the principal nations of northwestern Asia and Europe. They have been the prominent actors in the great drama of history, and have carried to their fullest growth all the elements of active life with which our nature is endowed. They have perfected society and morals; and we learn from their literature and works of art the elements of science, the laws of art, and the principles of philosophy. In continual struggle with each other and with Semitic and Turanian races, these Aryan nations have become the rulers of history, and it seems to be their mission to link all parts of the world together by the chains of civilisation, commerce and religion."[11] The ideas of Aryan superiority and of a constant rivalry between the Aryans and Semitic and Turanian races were to contain an explosive power unimaginable to the writer about the middle of the 19th century.

A few years later, in 1860, Max Mueller condensed his theory of a "continual struggle" between the "races" further by maintaining that the only actors in the history of the civilized world had been the Semitic and Aryan "races."[12] Yet, he did not share Ernest Renan's derogatory generalisations about the so-called "Semitic race."[13] But that did not prevent him to continue to speak in terms of racial distinctions between the Aryans and Semitics, and to identify linguistic and racial character. Lecturing on the Vedas in 1865, Max Mueller referred to the ancient Aryans as follows: "Those men [*viz.*, the unknown Aryans] were the true ancestors of our race . . . We are by nature Aryan, Indo-European, not Semitic: our spiritual kith and kin are to be found in India, Persia, Greece, Italy, Germany; not in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Palestine."[14]

Is there any justification, one must ask, for the charge made against Max Mueller, that he, who gave an additional, vague and general meaning to the term "Aryan" by using it for the *"Urvolk"* of the Aryan invaders to India as well as for the European nations, and who used the term "Aryan" as opposed to that of "Semitic," can be called a spiritual grandfather of the Nazi concept of an "Aryan race" as the embodiment of all good qualities of man, and of a "Semitic race" to which all evil was attributed ?[15] I do not think so. For, when Max Mueller saw the havoc created by the misuse of the concept of an "Aryan *Urvolk*", particularly by attributing to it a racial and anti-semitic character, he re-stated his position by drawing a clear line between linguistic and ethnological terminology. In his lecture "On the results of the science of language", given at Strassburg University in 1872,[16] he clarified his stand by saying: "One forgets too easily that, whenever we speak of Aryan and Semitic Families, we make a purely linguistic distinction. There are Aryan and Semitic languages, but it is unscientific—unless one allows oneself some freedom in expression—to speak of Aryan Race, Aryan Blood and Aryan Skulls, and to try ethnological classifications on linguistic bases. These sciences, linguistics and ethnology, should, at this time at least, be kept strictly apart from each other."[17] Fifteen years later, Max Mueller was the more categorical: "Aryan, in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race."[18] And twenty years later, Max Mueller complained about the artificial animosity that split up humanity: "We know, of course, that languages presuppose speakers; but when we say Aryas, we say nothing about skulls, or hair, or eyes, or skin, as little as we say Christians or Mohammedans, English or Americans. All that has been said and written about the golden hair, the blue eyes, and the noble profile of the Aryas, is pure invention, unless we are prepared to say that Socrates, the wisest of the Greeks, was not an Arya, but a Mongolian. We ought in fact, when we speak of Aryas, to shut our eyes most carefully against skulls, whether dolichocephalic, or brachycephalic, or mesocephalic, whether orthognathic, prognathic, or mesognathic."[19] The misunderstanding, or rather, misuse in Europe, and particularly in Germany, of the term "Aryan" was to have the most disastrous consequences. It was a very unfortunate by-effect of the application of the very precise Sanskrit term "Aryan", used in

India in a clearly defined sense, to denote the merely imagined language and unknown group of people that were the assumed ancestors of all peoples speaking an Indo-European language, and to attach to it a high estimation in contrast to the term "Semitic."

Terms have their own history and in many instances shape history. The change of meaning may have consequences unwanted and even unimagined by those who introduce an expression or attribute to it a new sense. If Max Mueller launched his protest in the strongest possible terms against those who began to develop ideas of an "Aryan race", he did so from a feeling of responsibility. For he was aware that the differences among men and nations were in many cases those of terminology, and that such differences could be the causes of quarrels, wars and the misery of mankind. In 1865, Max Mueller wrote: "Men before, now have fought for an idea, and have laid down their lives for a word . . . 'Nations and languages against dynasties and treaties', this is what has remodelled, and will remodel still more, the map of Europe."[20]

Max Mueller's attempts to unravel man's past met with increasing criticism since the eighties of the 19th century. His effort to discover "ancient man" by way of ideas expressed in scriptures, without paying much attention to ceremonies, customs and worship, was exposed as unrealistic by Andrew Lang in England and O. Gruppe in Germany.[21] Yet it was not only the approach that was criticized by Lang, but the interpretation. Max Mueller had, at different occasions, expressed the opinion that reasonableness, purity, etc., as observable in the Veda, were "nearer the beginning" of man, than what could, for instance, be observed with the "wild invocations of Hottentots of Bushmen". Andrew Lang satirized Max Mueller's "anthropological" investigations in his "Double Ballade of Primitive Man."[22] Max Mueller came to be caught in a contradiction as to the direction of development of mankind. In the earlier period of his career, he adhered to the opinion shared by romanticists, that the human mind had been closest to the secrets of life and God in the most ancient times, and that all that followed had been a departure from it, or rather, a decay. Such a view had received a support from the then prevailing view of philologists, that human speech at one time had been in a perfect form, from which it had decayed.

The basis of this theory of decay ran counter to the interpretation of man's history by Hegel, and of the origin of species by Charles Darwin. Max Mueller's work in the first years of his academic career is characterized by an attempt to reconcile those two diametrically opposed interpretations: that of decay and that of evolution. Needless to say that the latter gained the upper hand.

2. *The Study of Languages*

Max Mueller's approach to the problems of language had, when he died, undergone a long process with more or less clearly perceptible changes since his original concept of them at the beginning of his scholarly career. As has been said before, originally, linguistics had been a tool for him in solving some of the great questions of mankind.

For some time, at least, Max Mueller hoped to be able to push back the barriers of known history and gain some insight into the beginnings of man's history. Man's history began when man began to communicate in words. He wrote: ". . . the one great barrier between the brute and man is *Language*. Man speaks, and no brute has ever uttered a word. Language is our Rubicon, and no brute will dare to cross it.'[23] And as man's history in the past was constantly influenced by language, it would be influenced by language in future. Words, containing ideas, had sown discontent amongst families and friends and nations; and the contenders had ever been ready to lay down their lives for an idea. On the other hand, words embodied the intellectual history of mankind: "What people call 'mere words' are in truth the monuments of the fiercest intellectual battles, triumphal arches of the greatest victories won by the intellect of man . . . Every word is the palace of a human thought, and in scientific etymology we possess the charm with which to call these ancient thoughts back to light."[24]

Max Mueller held an opposite position to that of his contemporary Karl Marx. He was basicly an "idealist", who believed in the preponderance of ideas over the material world. But a precise definition of Max Mueller's attitude is not that easy, and certainly not possible in one term. For, Max Mueller was not a pure "idealist". Language, for instance, was for him not a matter that was totally influenceable by man and his will: it developed according to rules and laws that were outside his power of influence.

Max Mueller believed in God, but he could not escape the compulsion of contemporary Darwinism and Spencerism. The most important feature of his intellectual development was the combination of a belief in God with a belief in Darwin's concept of Natural Selection, and Spencer's idea of Evolution. He was attracted by Darwinism. Yet, it cost him some inner struggle, before he was ready to admit some validity of Darwin's concepts. Although he had adopted some ideas of Darwin already in his *Lectures on the Science of Language* (1861), he was not yet ready in 1872 to surrender the field without fight to the triad of Darwin, Spencer and Haeckel, as he wrote to his friend W. E. Gladstone: "The problems started by Darwin, H. Spencer, Haeckel, etc., are matters of life and death, and they must become the battlefield for the next philosophical campaign. I confess I have no reply to some of their arguments..."[25] Max Mueller's recognition of the ideas of these pioneer thinkers in the natural sciences and philosophy as valid proposals for the understanding and explanation of linguistic problems, was one of his major contributions to the world of thought.

Max Mueller claimed a position for linguistics amongst the *physical sciences*. The main reason that he gave was this: contrary to art, science, philosophy and religion that have a history, language "admits only of growth", it was a product of nature.[26] The causes which effected a growth were not under the control of man.[27]

From such a basic admission, Max Mueller drew various conclusions :

1. The growth of language was subject to the laws of nature, which could be discovered by the very method that was employed in other sciences (like botany or chemistry), and consisting of three stages, the *empirical* (i.e. the collection and general formulation of a system), *the classificatory* (i.e. the process of comparison) and the *theoretical* or *metaphysical* (*viz.*, the formulation of general principles or natural laws by drawing conclusions from the observations).[28]

2. Once general principles had been discovered in a small sphere of a language, they could be inferred in other and remoter spheres, in the same way, as it was possible to draw conclusions from more recent geological formations to more ancient ones. It was legitimate to assume that, what had been found on a small scale, would be true on a larger scale as well.[29]

3. The idea of *Natural Selection,* by which Darwin had explained the development of the species, offered a plausible explanation for the development of language. This conclusion was formulated by Max Mueller as follows : "Natural selection, if we could but always see it, is invariably rational selection. It is not any accidental variety that survives and perpetuates itself ; it is the individual which comes nearest to the original intention of the creator, or what is best calculated to accomplish the ends for which the type or species to which it belongs was called into being, that conquers in the great struggle for life. So it is in thought and language. Not every random perception is raised to the dignity of a general notion, but only the constantly recurring, the strongest, the most useful ; and out of the endless number of general notions that suggest themselves to the observing and gathering mind, those only survive and receive definite phonetic expression which are absolutely requisite for carrying on the work of life."[30]

Comparative linguistics were not invented by Max Mueller —they had been started in Germany before—, but he tried to give it a philosophical and scientific foundation and in such a way to assign to it a proper place in contemporary thought, that was dominated by the ideas of Darwin, Spencer and Haeckel. In so doing, he familiarized the English academic world and the wider public with the subject of comparative philology. He made it, in fact, a "popular" subject, in which even non-academics took a keen interest. Even Queen Victoria was tickled by curiousity to learn about the new science that the German professor at Oxford propagated. She invited him to lecture to her and her children at her court on the "Science of Language", in the first days of January 1864. It must be granted, however, that this invitation was not only a demonstration of her intellectual inquisitiveness, but equally a move of a diplomatic nature. By inviting the German professor, she meant to criticize Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, who tried to intervene on behalf of Denmark in the Dano-German conflict.[31]

3. *The Study of Religion and Mythology*

When Max Mueller embarked on his philological research, the German scholar A. Kuhn had just published his work *Zur aeltesten Geschichte der indo-germanischen Voelker,* ("On the Most Ancient History of the Indo-European Nations") 1845. Concluding, he sketched out, what could be done in future research on ancient history. He wrote: "There is still abundance of material available for comparison, for there is *the whole province of religion* . . . If we have had occasion more than once in these pages to reach conclusions by means of the language of the Vedas, this will happen still more frequently when we are considering the myths and religion of these writings in relation to those of other races."[23] No doubt, A. Kuhn himself concentrated his further studies on the problem that he had formulated thus. But the great pioneer and founder of the subject comparative religions was unquestionably Max Mueller.

The object of his studies were the ancient texts of Indian philosophy and religions. The only tool by which he could penetrate into the ideas of ancient times was philology. Max Mueller's research on religions was based on the study of languages. In employing the philological method, he was able to refine his ideas on the comparison of languages as well as to draw from a large source of methodological know-how inferences on the new subject of comparative religions. The philological "detour" had another reason. In the first two or three decades, Max Mueller would not have been able to embark on the study of comparative religions for a very obvious reason: He was clinging to Christianity in a way that allowed no room for putting it on a par with non-Christian religions. To make it the object of research, a certain kind of maturity was a *conditio sine qua non,* which demanded not only toleration of other religions, but the readiness to abandon all dogmatism and to be open for unorthodox truths, that might be even unpleasant from a Christian's point of view.

In attaining this maturity, Max Mueller was greatly helped by the intellectual currents of his day. Darwin's ideas formulated in his *Origin of the Species* (1859), and David Friedrich Strauss' onslaught on traditional Christianity by his German works: *The Life of Jesus,* (1835), and *The Old and the New Faith,* (1872) shook the strong pillars of Christian theology in their very foundations. Max Mueller's first endeavours in the field of religion consisted in a stock-taking of what was left and remained unshaken. Only after this period of incubation, was Max Mueller free from all religious fetters to start with his investigation of religions with full vigour.

The tremendous progress that science and scientific thought was making in those days, could not but have its effects upon intellectual life in general. Scientific laws came to be regarded as sacred and took the place of what had hitherto been called "divine laws." The scientific method of induction became the only tolerated tool for research. Max Mueller accepted the challenge of the "scientific" character of the *Zeitgeist.*

He did not, however, cast off his original religiousness completely. The laws of nature, which man could discover, were the will of God. "These laws", he held, "indicate to us the presence of a purpose in the mind of the Creator."[33] A search for the laws of nature by scientific method was for Max

Mueller a search for God in this world. "If the mind of man is once impressed with the conviction that there must be order and law everywhere, it never rests again until all that seems irregular has been eliminated, until the full beauty and harmony of nature has been perceived, and the eye of God beaming out from the midst of all His works."[34] As will be described later, he did not regard science as an anti-religious endeavour, but the modern expression of man's search for God.

The influence of Darwinian ideas on his *Science of Language* was considerable, as he himself freely admitted about ten years after its publication. Nevertheless, in his lecture at Strassburg University in 1872 "On the Results of the Science of Language"[35] he withdrew to some extent from his former position. "Language stands with one foot in the sphere of nature, with the other in the sphere of the intellectual world", he said, and continued by explaining that when some years ago he had laid a particular emphasis on the "natural" character of language, and when he had called the science of language the last and highest of the natural sciences, then it should be well understood that he had not lost sight of the spiritual (intellectual) or historical side of it.[36] Max Mueller went so far as to declare : "I am convinced that only the science of language can put us into a position to call a categorical 'Stop !' to the Theories of Evolution of the Darwinians, and enable us to draw a clear-cut line between that which distinguishes the spirit from the matter, and man from beast."[37]

Max Mueller must have realized that the "Stop" which he wanted to set to the victorious march of Darwinism had to be supported by arguments drawn from other quarters than the philological. At the beginning of the seventies of the 19th century, Max Mueller extended his studies to the comparison of religions. He became the originator of the academic subject "comparative religions". There were "outward" reasons for the expansion of his studies. Firstly, his edition of the Rigveda, with all its detailed philological research was approaching its end—his goal, namely to prove that Schopenhauer and most of his contemporaries entirely misunderstood the Vedas, was in sight ; secondly, his retirement from his position as Professor of comparative philology at Oxford was due in 1875.

Yet, the deeper, or inner, reason for the abandonment of his philological studies was his own dissatisfaction with the compromise that he had struck between Darwinism and his belief in God. The works of David F. Strauss (*The Life of Jesus* and *The Old and New Faith*) had shaken many established tenets of Christian theology and orthodox views on Christian religion. No doubt, since he took up his academic work in Oxford, Max Mueller had been looked upon as an ardent adherent to religious rationalism,[38] and in his religious views he had never been an orthodox, for he had ever held that Christian theology could and should not hide behind the bars of dogmas. The challenge by David F. Strauss' historical approach to theology, and by Darwin's, Spencer's and Haeckel's ideas of Evolution was too great as to keep Max Mueller quiet. He felt that much of the old faith had irretrievably been lost and much of the old view of nature was superseded by the discoveries of Darwin and Haeckel. He wrote to Gladstone in 1873 : ". . . Nor do I see a chance of victory—*viz.*, against the new philosophies—unless many positions which have become untenable are freely surrendered."[39]

The response that Max Mueller gave to the new rationalism in theology and "materialism" and "evolutionism" in the interpretation of nature is most illustrative of his entire outlook and approach to philosophical questions. He applied the method of comparison, which had become the proper method of modern philology, and had been resorted to by the author of the *Origin of Species*, to use it for the study of religions. The collection and edition of "*The Sacred Books of the East*", which Max Mueller began in 1875, was a process equivalent to the first stage of collecting the material, as he had described it in his *Lectures on the Science of Language.*

An important precondition for such a comparative study of religions was a complete admission of parity of all religions. In his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (published London 1873), Max Mueller demanded: "Let us but treat our own sacred books with neither more nor less mercy than the sacred books of any other nation . . ."[40] The abandonment of any predeliction and preference of a religion was, as has been said before, a *conditio sine qua non* to the comparative study of religions, as was the abandonment of the preference of one's mother-tongue in the study of philology.[41] Equality of the objects of comparison had to be established before the tribunal of scientific investigation. "Each of us", Max Mueller wrote, "may have his own feeling as to his own mother-tongue, or his own mother-religion, but as historians we must allow the same treatment to all. We have simply to collect all the evidence that can be found on the history of religion all over the world, to sift and classify it, and thus try to discover the necessary antecedents of all faith, the laws which govern the growth and decay of human religion, and the God to which all religion tends."[42] The opposition to make religion subject to "scientific" analysis did not only arise in quarters of his own religion—as his difficulties in Oxford reveal—but also in India. But, when he started his work on the Rigveda, the controversy as to the right of European scholars to criticize the traditional interpretations of the sacred writings of the Brahmans had already gone on for nearly twenty years. Max Mueller did not merely claim a right to criticize; he regarded it to be a scholar's duty to do so. For, only that tradition was acceptable, which stood the test, when submitted to scientific criticism.[43]

Besides resorting to the method of comparison in the study of religions, Max Mueller accepted another explanation used in natural sciences and employed by him in the study of languages, namely the theory of evolution and growth. The field in which he demonstrated the validity of the application of the comparative method and the usefulness of interpreting religions as processes instead of as static phenomena, was religious India, developing since ancient times. The "Hibbert Lectures", which he delivered during the months of April, May and June 1878, in Westminster Abbey, were given the title *"Lectures on the*

Origin and Growth of Religion as illustrated by the Religions of India" (published in London, 1878).

In choosing the religions of India, to prove his theory of evolution in the field of man's search for God, Max Mueller was motivated by this consideration: "No country can be compared to India as offering opportunities for a real study of the genesis and growth of religion . . . I have selected the ancient religion of India to supply the historical illustrations of my own theory and growth of religion. That study was suggested to me during a lifelong study of the sacred books of India . . ."[44] In India, the development of religious thought was most easily traceable, because of the preservation of the ancient ideas in texts, handed down from generation to generation, and because of the tenacious life of ancient religious customs in that country.[45] In India, one could observe the growth from the beginnings to those high concepts that the mind of man had developed in the course of history; and, "it is there that we can learn what man is by seeing once more what man has been."[46]

A study of the Rigveda revealed how the conceptions of the Deity arose, till they reached, mainly in the Upanishads, that stage of a concept of the Godhead, which had been attained by Greek and Jewish thinkers at Alexandria in the first centuries of Christianity.[47] It was possible to discover "that old road (of thought) on which the Aryans proceeded from the visible to the invisible, from the finite to the infinite."[48] Max Mueller felt sure that it was "the right road," and he held, that "though we may never here on earth reach the end of it, we may trust it", because there was no other road for man.[49] The idea of evolution that Max Mueller adhered to was that of an unquestioned belief in progress. What had happened in the past was right, and what would happen in future would equally be right. Max Mueller had an unshakeable trust in the development of the world and the course of human history, as will be apparent also in his attitude to politics. He expressed his belief in progress in connection with the religious history of India in these terms: "From station to station man had advanced on it [i.e. the right road] further and further. As we mount higher, the world grows smaller, heaven comes nearer."[50]

Somewhat inconsistent with this view of an unending advancement of mankind and religion is Max Mueller's division of the history of India, into the three stages of "childhood, manhood and old age" and attributing Indian religious thought to these periods.[51] Such an interpretation amounts to an assumption of an organic growth combined with the idea of decay. It is really a contradiction to the Hegelian idea of constant progress and a precursor of Spengler's concept of the development of human civilisation and culture.

In the "Gifford Lectures" which Max Mueller delivered at the University of Glasgow in 1888 (published in London 1889), entitled *Natural Religion,* he came to specify his ideas on religion. He made it in its entirety subject to historical and comparative research. This was but a natural conclusion of his assumptions that, firstly, religions had grown in an uninterrupted way like languages and other bodies of human attitudes, and that, secondly, for an understanding of one's own religion, the comparative study of other religions would be most beneficial.[52]

By this time, Max Mueller had already realized an interconnection between religion and thought and language upon each other, "History teaches us", he wrote, "that religions change and must change with the constant changes of thought and language in the progress of the human race."[53] Max Mueller broke with all conventional forms of piety when he divided, what he called *Natural Religion* into *Physical, Anthropological,* and *Psychological* Religion, as the different ways of religious perception and search for God, *viz.*, in nature, in men and in oneself.[54] Max Mueller's questioning of traditional religious beliefs did not stop at destroying some cherished ideals on the permanency of religious dogmas. He maintained, moreover, that God did not reveal himself to an individual merely at a moment of grace, but only in the course of history. Thus, history became a road, or means, of discovering God's will and ways. Max Mueller's early scepticism in man's capability of discovering the intention of the "Creator",[55] had given way to an outspoken optimism and strong belief in the possibility of discovering God and the purpose of creation by way of a historical study of religious thought. Yet, it is obvious that Max Mueller was torn between the philosophy of man's evolution as expressed by Darwin and Spencer, and the Hegelian philosophy by the evolution of the world from the material to the spiritual plane on the one hand and the claims of historical development as developed by the so-called "historical school" in Germany on the other. Although he paid increasingly homage to the latter school,[56] he really did not endorse its basic principles, as the ideas of individualism, and historical development in its ups and downs, set-backs and progress as a result of man's endeavours and historical events. Max Mueller really was out to discover general and common principles. His aim was not to analyse the particular, but to compare different elements in order to arrive at conclusions which, he believed, were, or came, close to those laws by which human development was guided. Such an attitude prohibited the development of an actual "sense of history." Max Mueller judged human phenomena frequently without a regard for the lapse of time. He held, for instance, that "the religious thoughts and religious theories of former ages were in their time of exactly the same kind as the thoughts of our present philosophers."[57]

Moreover, there was little, or no room for any "whims" of history, of sudden and unexpected changes in the course of events as a result of a specific human decision or tragedy. Man and the world developed as they ought to under the supreme command of a divine will. In his *Three Introductory Lectures on the Science of Thought*, delivered in London in 1887,[58] Max Mueller stated his position on the rationality of intellectual and natural history as follows: "True philosophy teaches us another lesson, namely that nothing except what ought to be, and that in the evolution of the mind as well as in that of nature *natural* selection is in reality *rational* selection. We must learn to recognize in language the true evolution of reason. In that evolution nothing is real and remains real except what is rational, and *even the apparently irrational and anomalous has its reason and justification.*"[59]

This identification of "natural" and "rational" is the result of Max Mueller's ultimate identification of "historical evolution" with the idea of divine revelation.[60] The whole world and all development was pervaded by reason, which could be discovered by man. "I cannot help seeing order, law, reason or logos in the world, and I cannot account for it by merely *ex post* events, call them what you like—survival of the fittest, natural selection, or anything else."[61]

The Darwinian theory of evolution and struggle for existence, which Max Mueller had in the early seventies of the 19th century condemned as an attack on religion, became, by the end of his life, incorporated into his religious belief. From the assumption that all development reflected the will of God, Max Mueller drew the conclusion that the proof of the existence of God was to be found in the history of religions only.[62] Those "natural laws," discovered and propagated by Darwin, gained in Max Mueller's eyes the very quality of "divine laws," and proof of the existence of God. Max Mueller, who made a bid to check the progress of Darwinian thought, and to avert its detrimental impact upon the Christian religion, eventually tried to neutralize it by incorporating the main ideas of Darwin into his concepts of God and religions. A study of nature as well as of history became, in fact, endeavours of a religious character: "In both [i.e. history and nature] we try to read the reflex of the laws and thoughts of a Divine Wisdom."[63]

The study of history was more than learning historical facts and dates; it was the "study of a continuous process in the events of the world" with an aim to discover "a law that holds the world together."[64] The perception of an evolution in human history became identical with a divine revelation. Max Mueller described his understanding of the nature of divine revelation and its process through history in his Gifford Lectures: "We may discover in all the errors of mythology, and in what we call the false or pagan religions of this world, a progress towards truth, a yearning after something more than finite, a growing recognition of the Infinite, throwing off some of its veils before our eyes, and from century to century revealing itself to us more and more in its own purity and holiness. And *thus the two concepts, that of evolution and that of revelation,* which seem at first so different, become one in the end. If there is a purpose running through the ages, if nature is not blind, if there are agents, recognized at last as the agents of one Will, behind the whole phenomenal world, then the evolution of man's belief in that Supreme Will is itself the truest revelation of that Supreme Will, and must remain the adamantine foundation on which all religion rests, whether we call it natural or supernatural."[65]

Although I have expressed my doubts as to the historical character of Max Mueller's views, there can be no difference of opinion, that he placed the religions of the world upon the same level upon which other realms of human thought and institutions had been put—as law and linguistics, literature and philosophy, etc. This subjection of religions to historical enquiries is a logical consequence of the spread of historicism—*viz.*, the discovery and recognition of historical growth—in all spheres of life during the 19th century.

Max Mueller's work in this respect was imbued with the *Zeitgeist* of the second half of the 19th century; but it bore, nonetheless, his own characteristic stamp. This, however, is merely the academic side of it. There is another one: the religious aspect. By recognizing religious development, Max Mueller did not abandon the idea of divine revelation, but he assigned it to history. To quote his own words: "The idea of God is the result of an unbroken historical evolution, call it development, or a purification, but not of a sudden revelation."[66] Max Mueller did not throw all his former religious faith overboard, but formulated a new belief, quite distinct from the Christian creed or any other religion. It was his attempt to save religion from being totally swept away by the new philosophical concept of evolution. Max Mueller wanted to stabilize a belief in God by a resort to history. There was no better proof of God, he believed, than the course of the history of religions itself: "The historical proof of the existence of God, which is supplied to us by the history of the religions of the world, has never been refuted, and cannot be refuted. It forms the foundations of all others proofs . . ."[67]

Max Mueller's new approach to religion was to have a great impact upon the religious reform movements of Modern India. The religious tenets of the *Prarthana Samaj* in Western India, a branch of the Bengal *Brahmo Samaj,* were moulded largely by the ideas of Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, whose approach exhibits a great similarity to, if not identity with, Max Mueller's critical and comparative study of religions. The discovery of the divine will in the course of history were aims common to both of them. Bhandarkar, like Max Mueller, abandoned any belief in a momentous divine revelation, and, instead, held that "our religious basis is that supplied by the critical method."[68] Bhandarkar was confident that the truth which God wanted to convey to man could be discovered firstly by comparing all religions in the world, for "there is truth in all", and secondly, by studying the history of religious thought in one and the same country, preferably India with its rich stores of religious thought.[69] His faith, which he propagated from the platform of the *Prarthana Samaj,* was largely that which Max Mueller was propagating in his lectures and writings. The following statement by Bhandarkar reveals the affinity of his ideas to those of Max Mueller: "God has been leading men, from the times when they were in the primitive condition to the present day, towards the realization of higher and higher religious truth."[70]

Max Mueller's new approach to religion, which, as has been said, was both a theological as well as a scientific breakthrough, penetrated deeply into modern Indian reform thought. If Bhandarkar, like Max Mueller himself, endorsed it on the two levels of scientific investigation as on that of the religious quest for God, Keshub Chunder Sen (1838—1884), for one time the great spiritual head of the Brahmo Samaj, embraced Max Mueller's ideas on the purely religious sector. Max Mueller, who was for a long time in correspondence with him, offered him a solution of many of his religious problems, in Max Mueller's own words: "That the principle of historical growth or natural evolution applied to religion also, as I had tried to prove in my books on the Science of Religion, was to him [i.e. Keshub Chunder Sen] the solution of keenly felt difficulties, a real solace in his own perplexities."[71] Max Mueller's new religious thought met with appreciation in India, not, however, in Europe.

It must be admitted, that Max Mueller's writings did not rouse enthusiasm in all quarters of the Indian intellectual scene. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the great novelist and poet of Bengal, was strongly opposed to all interpretations of Indian sacred texts and other indigenous works by Western Indologists. His rejection of Max Mueller's Rigveda interpretation, particularly of the introduction of the term "henotheism"—by which Max Mueller wanted to denote the actual belief in one god combined with a worship of his different forms—, was not so much directed against Max Mueller personally or European Indologists generally, but against the attitude of his own countrymen, who were ever ready to accept European interpretations of Indian religions as the last word of wisdom.[72]

The general statement of the phenomenon of a development of the different religions was about all that the acceptance of historicism in the study of comparative religions led to. It was less than what Max Mueller had expected, when he started his investigations. It had been possible to show, for instance, the relationship between the Greek language and Sanskrit, or German and English; but it was impossible to establish a definite relationship, for example, between Buddhism and Christianity. For many years it had been Max Mueller's ambition to discover an interdependence between the Buddhist and Christian religions. He stated his failure to do so in a letter to his friend Gladstone in these terms: ". . . I cannot resist the impression that there must have been historical contact between the Christian and the Buddhist intellectual atmosphere, I cannot explain how it came about. I cannot point out the exact historical channel through which the communication took place."[73]

Religions and religious thought could not be handled as languages; they could not be rigidly analysed, classified, compared and pigeonholed. Max Mueller's courageous endeavour to subject religion to a rigorous scrutiny did not yield any spectacular scientificly or historically important result. It created, nonetheless, a by-product of an even greater significance: a reduction of theological dogmatism, particularly in Christian religion.

4. *The structure of Max Mueller's work*

Max Mueller's works on linguistics, philosophy and religions form a unity. Why he had embarked on the study of the Rigveda and comparative linguistics was never lost sight of by him in his later career. Behind all specialized and detailed investigations loomed large his main aim: to contribute to philosophy by probing into the past of those activities that reflected the intellct of man, his language, thought and faith.

The idea of evolution permeated and fermented all his concepts on the history of the spirit and intellect of man. By combining all specialized subjects "scientifically", he hoped to discover general principles and "natural laws" that had the same quality as those laws that governed the physical world. His image of nature and his comprehension of natural laws were of the Baconian and Newtonian type. What Francis Bacon had suggested as a method to study nature—*viz.*, to collect, classify, compare, and formulate in terms of general laws—was adopted by Max Mueller as a means for the study of man's intellectual development. And Newton's concept of the physical world, its subjection to general laws that could be discovered, formed an example for Max Mueller's interpretation of the intellectual and spiritual world of man. Despite his continued attachment to religious bonds and belief, his introduction of "scientific" investigation into subjects of a religious character was a revolutionary departure from the preoccupations that had, until then, proved too strong to discover in non-Christian religions anything good or comparable to the Christian religion.

Oriental scholarship had thus contributed to open new vistas in the study of man's intellectual development and had, as Max Mueller believed, revealed those principles that lay behind the creation of the world; it had revealed, as he wrote, "laws and purposed running through the most distant ages of the world, of which our forefathers had no suspicion. Here it is, where Oriental studies appeal not to specialists only, but to all who see in the history of the human race the supreme problem of all philosophy, which in the future will have to be studied, not as heretofore by *a priori* reasoning, but chiefly by the light of historical evidence. The Science of Language, the Science of Mythology, the Science of Religion, aye, the Science of Thought, all have assumed a new aspect, chiefly through the discoveries of Oriental scholars who have placed facts in the place of theories, and displayed before us the historical development of the human race, as a worthy rival of the development of nature, displayed before our eyes by the genius and patient labours of Darwin."[74]

Human thought had been subject to the same rules of development that Darwin had discovered for the evolution of the species. Human history showed a continuous process of evolution in all spiritual and intellectual spheres. In religion, Max Mueller explained it by the will of God to reveal himself gradually, though in various forms, in the course of history. In the case of human thought, there had been a similar development from man's earliest intellectual exercises in "Aryan" times upto the philosophy of Kant.[75] In his "Last Essays", Max Mueller formulated his grand vision in the following terms: "The bridge of thoughts and sighs that spans the whole history of the Aryan world has its first arch in the *Veda*, its last in Kant's *Critique* *of Pure Reason.* In the *Veda* we watch the first unfolding of the human mind as we can watch it nowhere else. Life seems simple, natural, childlike. . . While in the **Veda** we may study the childhood, we may study in *Kant's Critique* the perfect manhood of the Aryan mind. It has passed through many phases, and every one of them . . . has left its mark."[76]

In the field of language, Max Mueller had accepted as formulae of explanation Darwin's ideas of "struggle for existence" and "the survival of the fittest". The contest of words had ever ended with the victory of the best expressions. In the field of thought, however, Max Mueller was reluctant to adopt a similar explanation of selection. What made a period of human intellect a great period, was richness and variety of thought, coexistent and not exclusive. Thus, Ancient India, exhibiting so many ideas, had been a great period. The development and richness of man's thought was dependent upon other spheres of human activities. And here, we witness Max Mueller's basic concern with politics : times of peace were conducive to and promoting intellectual endeavours, times of war generally resulted in set-backs. The absence of politics and material strife, that had characterized Ancient India, was an explanation for the unusual richness of the intellectual life at that time.[77]

Even, if he was not a politician, he was always aware that a scholar could not but be deeply concerned with politics ; for political events and developments were conditioning and influencing the world of thought and academic activities. Max Mueller was political-minded, not besides his concern for the intellectual world, but because of it. He had, from the beginning of his career, recognized a connection between the fields of ideas and political history : ideas could be the roots of war. In the course of his scholarly development, Max Mueller recognized the dependence of politics upon the world of thought. Although he did not abandon his earlier "idealist" notion on the impact of ideas on the course of history, it is apparent that his growing dependence on the ideas of Darwin, his adoption of the notion of "the struggle for existence", in explaining intellectual processes, helped him to realize "material" environmental forces as determining factors in the world of thought. The pure idealism with which Max Mueller began his scholarly life gave way to an increasing recognition of those trends of 19th century thought that were born out of the philosophies of Darwin, Haeckel and Spencer.

5. *On Christianity and Hinduism*

There have been many divergent views on Max Mueller's religious faith. He has been accused of having supported the idea of christianizing India and even of having striven hard and planned meticulously to kill Hindu *Dharma* and Sanskrit. On the other hand, Max Mueller was praised for having embraced Hinduism, though not by conversion but by actually professing. Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar wrote on Max Mueller's religious creed : "Max Mueller's treatment of Indian philosophy was not merely that of a scholar, but of an advocate and admirer —a man who had penetrated into the spirit of the thing . . . His later attitude towards the Vedanta struck his friends as almost entire identification with Sankara's interpretation, though he was not without sympathy with other schools of commentators."[78]

None of these views is correct. The first one is, moreover, mischievous in character. Any attempt to generalize on Max Mueller's attitude with a simple classification meets with failure. He, like all men, underwent a continuous development and change. He was, as has been shown, particularly conscious of being the architect of his work, and as much as he could be, a moulder of his development. It would be too much to say, that he lived biographically ; but there is no doubt that he was particularly conscious of the "composition of his life'', in which attitude he was a follower of Goethe and his age. There was never a break in Max Mueller's development ; but there were changes, that grew logically out of the acceptance of new ideas and the abandonment of older and untenable ones.

At the beginning of his career, Max Mueller was "more Christian," if that expression be permitted, than at the end ; and at the end he embraced in his creed more elements of Hinduism than he had done at the outset. Therefore, in order to give a fair answer to the question whether Max Mueller embraced Christianity or Hinduism, one has to look into his life, not at a given moment only, and not with a purpose that spoils the result. A very judicious explanation of Max Mueller's obsession with Christianity in India has been offered by Professor R. K. Dasgupta,[79] who holds that Max Mueller had been misled in his judgments on the Nature of the Brahmo Samaj movement as well as on its relative power and impact in India. But this explanation does not come to grip with the real issue : what was the character of Max Mueller's Christian belief ? Only by looking into the make-up of his faith will we be able to explain his attitude towards Christianity in India. For, it was the particular character of his Christian creed that permitted his liberal interpretation of the Brahmo Samaj.

Max Mueller believed in the Christian God. The instances, where he refers to his belief in God are numerous. They are most obvious in his correspondence with his friend Baron Bunsen, the Prussian ambassador in London, who helped him to settle down in England. There is no doubt, however, that he was all but orthodox in his outlook. It has been stated that because of his heretic and unorthodox religious views, he attracted on his person the scorn and disfavour of the Oxford clergy, which rallied all possible opposition to his election for the Boden Professorship of Sanskrit at Oxford in 1860.

There is no denial that, particularly in the first four decades of his life, he was a great supporter of Christian missionizing activity throughout the world, but he favoured only a "liberal" Christianity, which would make allowance to personal interpretations and national peculiarities. Missionary work was useful not for bringing non-Christians into the fold of dogmatic faith, but for the spread of those tenets of Christianity that were beneficial and acceptable to all mankind. In a letter to the Duke of Argyll, Max Mueller wrote in 1865: "The Christianity of our nineteenth century will hardly be the Christianity of India."[80] In other words: not the form and dogma mattered, but the contents and spirit; not the number of converts counted, but the diffusion of ideas. If the Christian spirit was embraced in forms other than that of the Christian religions known in the West, no harm would be done to Christianity.

In India, Max Mueller recognized a new faith, which drew largely from the Christian spirit, although not dispensing with the religious heritage of the nation: the Brahmo Samaj. The religious reform-movement in India was interpreted by him as a symptom of the decay of the old forms of the indigenous faiths. It is in such a context only, that Max Mueller's utterances on, what he called, "Brahmanism", meaning the ancient forms of Hinduism, can be fully understood. When he wrote to the Duke of Argyll: ". . . the ancient religion of India is doomed—and if Christianity does not step in—whose fault will it be?", was no more than his own interpretation of the religious situation in India. It was not meant to incite further missionary activity, as is clear from the preceding sentences: "As to religion, that will take care of itself. The missionaries have done far more than they themselves seem to be aware of, nay much of the work which is theirs they would probably disclaim."[81]

This letter to the Duke of Argyll offers a clue to Max Mueller's controversial "Westminster Lecture on Missions", delivered on 3 December 1873, in Westminster Abbey.[82] Some orthodox Hindus accused the speaker later of aiming at the destruction of Hinduism, some orthodox Christians of an unpardonable heresy towards the Christian religion. An eminent English lawyer informed him in *The Times* of the length of imprisonment that the heretic should be punished with.[83] The reasons for such violent reactions from both, the Hindu and Christian quarters, are not difficult to find. Max Mueller wrote about orthodox Hinduism, which he called "Brahmanism," as follows: "The religion is still professed by at least 110,000,000 of human souls . . . and yet I do not shrink from saying that their religion is dying or dead."[84]

Max Mueller's argument in such categorical and sweeping statement was the outcome of a mental attitude which judged in terms of enlightenment and evolution rather than with historical categories. He held that the worship of Shiva and other Indian gods was of an even "more degraded and savage character" than the worship by the ancient Greeks and Romans of their god Jupiter and others.[85]

Max Mueller's interpretation of Hinduism as destitute of any missionary activity was heavily criticized by A. Lyall, who drew on his actual experiences in India.[86] The weakness of Max Mueller's conclusions was once more laid bare: it was the lack of an actual acquaintance with India. Max Mueller was a brilliant interpreter of Indian literature but not of Indian reality. He was a philologist and philosopher drawing his conclusions from literature only. His exclusiveness was his strength; but it was his weakness also, as he became painfully aware of in his writings on anthropology and mythology. Max Mueller concentrated all his hopes on the work of the Brahmo Samaj, which he thought, would eventually reform the whole of India: "If we think of the future of India, and of the influence which that country has always exercised on the East, the movement of religious reform which is now going on appears to my mind the most momentous in this century."[87] The Brahmo Samaj was for him a movement, by which Christian ideas penetrated into the religious life of India. "These Indian puritans are not against us; for all the highest purposes of life they are with us, and we, I trust, with them."[88] In a later clarification of his stand, Max Mueller admitted that if the Brahmo Samaj movement was a movement within "Brahmanism'', i.e. traditional Hinduism, then he was quite ready to admit that the latter was not dead.[89] The Westminster Lecture thus turns out to be an attack on Christian missionaries' work and a praise of the Indian religious reform movement, which is now generally recognized as a movement within Hinduism.

When Max Mueller turned from the study of comparative philology to that of comparative religions, his own religiousness came to be increasingly shaped by his academic studies. Tolerance, which had always marked his general outlook, did not only become more pronounced an attitude, but an adopted religious principle! His attachment to Christianity was loosened, firstly, by his concept of God's revelation as a historical or evolutionary process, which has been described above, and secondly, by the influence of religions other than Christian in the later decades of his life.

Max Mueller tended to become more and more eclectic. Although the primary aim of the *Sacred Books of the East* was to procure the basic material for comparing different religions, there was another, a secondary, motive of a religious nature behind it, which Max Mueller alluded to thus: "If some of those who read the translations learn how to discover some precious grains in the sacred books of other nations, though hidden under heaps of rubbish, our labour will not have been in vain, for there is no lesson which at the present time seems more important than to learn that in every religion there are such precious grains . . ."[90] This is, indeed, a very important statement: on the one hand, it implies a depreciation of non-Christian religions, which one might not have expected from the pen of the Oxford Professor, and, on the other hand, it is phrased as a request to appreciate the salient features of all religions. It is somewhat inconsequent, if not illogic, if Max Mueller condemned many features of other religions as "rubbish" by assuming the role of a judge, and at the same time demanded from other people a respect for precious details of those very religions. One is reminded of Henry Elliot's introduction to his and Dowson's "The History of India, as told by its own Historians," in which the author did not speak too highly of the historians of Muslim India, and yet found their histories an important source enough for modern historians to collect and publish them in the form of a "History of India."[91]

Max Mueller's eclecticism became more pronounced towards the end of his life. This brought him very close to the Brahmo Samaj in India. For some time he seemed to sympathize strongly with Keshub Chunder Sen, whose propagated faith was on the fringe of Christianity. But, as Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar had rightly observed, Max Mueller did not commit himself to the line of Keshub Chunder Sen. He felt equally strong, and eventually stronger attached to Debendranath Tagore's ideas.[92]

Throughout his life, the teachings of the Vedanta had exercised a lasting and ever increasing influence on his mind. A year before his death, Max Mueller exuberantly called the Vedanta Philosophy "a system in which human speculation seems to have reached its very acme."[93] In the same connection, Max Mueller confessed himself to be a Vedantist. He wrote: "I make no secret that all my life I have been very fond of the Vedanta", and further: "I share his (i.e. Schopenhauer's) enthusiasm for the Vedanta, and feel indebted to it for much that has been helpful to me in my passage through life."[94]

The change in Max Mueller's attitude becomes strikingly apparent, when one compares his pronouncements in the first volume of the *Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford 1879) with the *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy,* published twenty years later. Referring to Schopenhauer's scepticism with regard to the penetration of the Christian faith into India, Max Mueller commented in the earlier work: ". . . the great philosopher seems to me to have allowed himself to be carried away too far by his enthusiasm for the less known. He is blind for the dark sides of the Upanishads, and he wilfully shuts his eyes against the bright rays of eternal truth in the Gospels."[95] These words are plain enough: Max Mueller felt strongly attached, if not obliged to the Christian faith. In 1899, however, Max Mueller had come round to adopt unquestioningly Schopenhauer's stand, who had once stated: "In the whole world there is no study, except that of the original (of the Upanishads), so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnekhat (Persian translation of the Upanishads). It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."[96] Max Mueller's former criticism of the Upanishads had changed into their highest praise. His appreciation of Indian religious and philosophical thought reached its climax only when his life approached its end.

The academic work on Indian philosophy, the comparative study of oriental religions, had effected an inner conversion of Max Mueller from an unshakeable maintenance of the Christian faith to the adoption of the Vedanta Philosophy, which he amalgamated with a very liberal Christian outlook. His own experience, as well as the natures of the Brahmo Samaj and other religious reform-movements in India, were taken by him as indicative of the religious future of the world : the union of all faiths and creeds. Writing on *Ramakrishna : His Life and Sayings,* (London 1898), Max Mueller depicted his expectations of the future development thus : "This constant sense of the presence of God is indeed the common ground on which we may hope that in time not too distant the great temple of the future will be erected, in which Hindus and non-Hindus may join hands and hearts in worshipping the same Supreme Spirit . . ."[97]

The Max Mueller of 1898/99 had moved a long way from that position that he took, when he wrote to Baron Bunsen in the fifties, to Lord Argyll in the sixties, and when he lectured at Westminster Abbey on "Missions" in 1873. His growing acquaintance with Indian philosophy and religious thought had not only moderated his views but made him open-hearted to their religious bearing, to the same extent as his academic work had made him open-minded, and as his social intercourse with foreigners had made him tolerant and wise. If ever there has lived a man who, by inner struggles and by constant efforts throughout his whole life came at the end of it to embrace the highest spirit of India's religious and philosophical heritage, then it was Max Mueller. He was and remained a Christian by denomination ; his actual faith, however, would, by no orthodox Christian theologian in those days have been tolerated as a Christian faith. Max Mueller was the architect of his religious creed, as he was the architect of his scholarly career and the structure of his system of thought. What he did, he did with a mind wide open and what he accepted, he embraced with the greatness of his heart.

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and arguing that there should be "other considerations besides those of learned scholarship, though backed by Liberalism in Politics and German Rationalism in religion . . ."

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94. Ibidem, p. 193.—Swami Vivekananda, who had come to know Max Mueller personally in the last few years of the latter's life, described the German scholar's *weltanschauung* as follows: "Max Mueller is a Vedantist of Vedantists. He has, indeed, caught the real soul of the melody of the Vedanta in the midst of all its settings of harmonies or discords . . ."; quoted by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, "Max Mueller", in: *Eminent Orientalists, Indian, European, American;* Madras (without year), p. 203.
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> "It is the privilege as well as the duty of the scholar to stand aloof, to choose his own point of observation, always to look at both sides of the question, and never to forget the old principle of *audiatur et altera pars*." (Max Mueller's letter to the Editor of *The Times*, dated 5 August 1883, published 6 August 1883).

CHAPTER II

MAX MUELLER AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

Max Mueller was not a politician in the ordinary sense of the word. Therefore it may sound strange, perhaps even farfetched, to write about the political thought and activity of a man whose reputation and fame rest on his achievements in the world of scholarship and letters, on his publication of the *Rigveda*, on his editorship of the *Sacred Books of the East*, and on his many writings on comparative philology, religions and mythology.

Yet, Thomas Mann's dictum, "*In jeder geistigen Haltung ist das Politische latent*" (Politics is latent in every intellectual attitude), is very true in Max Mueller's case. Besides that, he was a man who was able to exercise a significant influence on the public opinions in India, Germany and England on account of his authority as a scholar, and of his social connections and political relations.

But, besides the public importance which Max Mueller attached to his findings, particularly in fields relating to India, there is another reason that would justify to speak of Max Mueller's political thought, this reason being his constant interest, and even interference, in his own way, of course, in actual politics. A peep into his correspondence, published and unpublished, and into his numerous articles which he wrote for newspapers and magazines, reveals that Max Mueller, ever since his arrival in England by the middle of the nineteenth century till the last weeks before his death in 1900, was as keen an observer of the political happenings of his time as of the different versions of the *Rigveda* and Sayana's commentaries. Similar to his attitude in the academic field, where he was never satisfied with research work alone, but always wanted its results to be known to his contemporaries, he was never a mere passive observer of political affairs. He tried to influence politics in various ways, dependent on his channels of communication and on his specific evaluation of political matters.

The patterns, or rather categories, of Max Mueller's political ideas had been developed already before his arrival in England; in a way, they had been put into his cradle. Born in Dessau in 1823, as son of the famous Wilhelm Mueller, the poet of the "*Griechenlieder*", "*Die schoene Muellerin*", and other songs set to music by Franz Schubert, he ever had before his eyes the example of his father who, like Byron in England, supported the cause of the Greek nation which was struggling for its national independence without ever having put his foot on Greek soil. As his father died very early, Max Mueller was more exposed to the influence of his grandfather, Ludwig von Basedow, who was the Prime Minister of the small Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau. Max Mueller breathed the atmosphere of court from the time of his childhood. His later love of royal surroundings did certainly not promote his popularity amongst Oxford dons. Lewis Farnell, first a student and later a critic of Max Mueller's scientific theories, remarked about the addiction of his *guru* not without a tinge of irony: "His weakness was emperors."[1] But to this remark of an old Oxonian which brings out only half the truth, we must add that his strength was emperors, too. His acquaintance with royalties opened avenues for him by which he would get firsthand information about political affairs and trends and by which he was able to exercise some influence, in those quarters, perhaps in an inconspicuous and indirect, but nonetheless effective manner.

1. *Indian Politics*

Max Mueller conceived his position in England as that of a spokesman for India, particularly of her cultural heritage and her aspirations. And, indeed, there were few contemporaries, who could claim such a position with as great a justification, as he had. Max Mueller aimed at bringing Europe and India closer together by developing mutual understanding and sympathies through spreading the knowledge of the East in the West. His importance for 19th century India was, however, of an even greater significance. He lay some of the important seeds of the phenomenon that is generally called the "Indian Renaissance". As Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar described it in his obituary article on Max Mueller: "He interpreted not only the East to the West, *but the East to the East also* . . ."[2] Max Mueller was fully aware that his publication of the Rigveda was an epoch-making event in the intellectual history of India. It had opened a new chapter in European Oriental studies, but it produced an even greater commotion all over India. "After all", Max Mueller wrote, "it was their Bible, and had never been published before during the three or four thousand years of its existence."[3]

Max Mueller criticized certain aspects of British rule in India in the same way as he found fault with Germany's internal development, as will be described subsequently. Yet, he accepted the existence of the British *raj* in India, and held it a great benefaction for the country. Such a view was in those days by no means extraordinary. On the contrary, it was shared by almost all leading Indians at the time, by M. G. Ranade, K. T. Telang, R. G. Bhandarkar, R. L. Mitra—to mention only a few.

Max Mueller demonstrated his loyalty to Britain and sympathies to India by translating the English national anthem "God save the Queen" into Sanskrit,[4] which, by the way, seems to have pleased the Queen more than her ministers. No doubt, in certain quarters of the British-Indian Government, Max

Mueller's activity and aims roused more annoyance than enthusiasm. Lord Curzon, for instance, did not hide his anger when writing to Max Mueller about the influence of ancient Indian studies upon the rebellious minds of young Indians.

Curzon had misgivings that the studies of Ancient Indian culture may create mischief. He did not blame the Oxford Professor directly, but implied : "There is no doubt that a sort of quasi-religious quasi-metaphysical ferment is going on in India strongly conservative and even reactionary in its general tendency. The ancient philosophies are being re-exploited, and their modern scribes and professors are increasing in number and fame.—What is to come out of this strange amalgam of superstition, transcendentalism, mental exaltation, and intellectual obscurity—with European ideas thrown as an outside ingredient into the crucible—who can say ?"[5]

Although Max Mueller supported and even admired the British-Indian Empire, he had little faith in its ultimate stability. How precarious he judged it is evident in this most telling simile : "When I see in a circus a man standing with outstretched legs on two or three horses, and two men standing on his shoulders, and other men standing on theirs, and a little child at the top of all, while the horses are running full gallop round the arena, I feel what I feel when watching the Government of India. One hardly dares to breathe, and one wishes one could persuade one's neighbours also to sit still and hold their breath . . ."[6] Admiration, awe and fear were the components of his mixed feelings towards British-India.

As he wished for a more liberal policy within contemporary Germany, he hoped for a better government in India. He rejected all ideas to govern India with a strong hand. "I have nothing to say in reply", he wrote in a letter to *The Times*, dated 5 August 1883—and published the following day—supporting the *Ilbert Bill*, "to that brutal logic which maintained that India was conquered by 'blood and iron' and must be ruled by 'blood and iron.' They are brave words, and no more." It was easy to say, but not justifiable to assume that the *Ilbert Bill* was the work of "political doctrinaires and of sentimental philanthropists", and that the Indian people did not care about it. It did not matter, how many people in India had ever heard of Ilbert. What really mattered was that a withdrawal of the Bill carrying his name "would leave a soreness in the minds of a very large number of the most loyal subjects of the Empress of India'', although it did not seem that it might lead to a rebellion.[7]

Whenever there was an opportunity, Max Mueller tried to bring home to the English public and to British policy makers the lesson that not all was well in the Indian Empire. The greatest mischief was the indifference of the rulers to Indian culture, and the greatest danger arose from the contempt shown towards Indian subjects. "India", he maintained, "has never had full justice done to it, and when I say this I think not only of ancient but of modern India also."[8] Max Mueller did not beat about the bush in communicating to W. E. Gladstone his views on the British Government in India. He criticized the "Oriental regime of Lord Lytton'', that, if it had continued, would have led to more "commotion" amongst the Indian subjects. But he praised Ripon's rule during which the Ilbert Bill was adopted.[9] He perceived only one remedy for the ever unstable situation in India : a better relationship between the rulers and the ruled. Max Mueller was hopeful that this could be achieved. He held that "real friendship between the rulers and the ruled in India ought to be no impossibility ; it has existed again and again ; only it should no longer be the exception but the rule."[10]

Max Mueller's attitude in Indian affairs had, indeed, more in common with those of the leading Indians of his days than with those of the majority of Englishmen. He did not, for instance, share Macaulay's view that English was bound to become the language, the sole language, of future India. He was deeply disappointed, when he went to see Macaulay at London in order to get his support for introducing Oriental Studies as a necessary preparation for the candidates of the Indian Civil Service.

Knowing that Macaulay had always discouraged such studies, Max Mueller had equipped himself with facts and arguments. But the "grand old man" took the initiative and conducted the entire conversation without giving Max Mueller a chance to state why he had actually come to see him. Max Mueller commented later : "I went back to Oxford a sadder and I hope a wiser man."[11]

Although Max Mueller did not gain the support of Macaulay for his project of introducing Oriental Studies for Indian Civil Service candidates, he never lost sight of the idea. He was thoroughly convinced that in the long run the British position in India could be stabilized only by a change of attitude of the rulers and by the introduction of reforms in India.

When the first plans of creating an Indian Institute at Oxford were discussed, he fully supported Monier-Williams. If he did not lend his support in the mid-seventies of the 19th century, he was motivated by entirely personal reasons : he refused to shake hands again with Monier-Williams,[12] by whom he had been defeated in the Oxford University Convocation in 1860, which elected Monier-Williams to the Boden professorship of Sanskrit at Oxford. Max Mueller pursued his own plans, by promoting the foundation in London of the "School for Modern Oriental Studies" in 1890. The administrators, going out to serve in India, should be equipped with a thorough knowledge of India's past. That would produce a beneficent impact on the atmosphere in the British-Indian Empire. If young civil servants went out to India, half acclimatized already to the atmosphere in which they were to spend many years, then they would not look upon the country as an exile, and on its inhabitants as strangers. And he defended the inhabitants of India : "They are not strangers, they are brothers. They are made of the same stuff as we ourselves."[13]

In the course of his increasing interest in modern India, Max Mueller realized that the stumbling block for improvement of the unsatisfactory situation was the attitude of the British administrators in India. The generalizations about the "Hindu character" were deeply ingrained in the minds of the men before they took up their positions in India, particularly through the education at Haileybury, where James Mill's *History of British India* was a prescribed text-book for several decades,[14] and where Oriental studies were next to unknown. Such a situation was deeply resented by Max Mueller, who tried to win Macaulay's support for changing the deplorable state of affairs. Max Mueller had a great trust in the work of human relations and regarded the extension of sympathy as the key to any satisfactory cooperation between the British and Indians on a long-term basis. Presenting a copy of his book *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* to Lord Curzon, Max Mueller wrote in his accompanying letter: "I am deeply conscious of the defects of my book, but I thought it might be useful to publish it, even in the imperfect form, in order to show the serious thinkers in India that we do not look down on them, but regard them as equals, when brought face to face with the great problems of life."[15]

Max Mueller's course of lectures at Cambridge University in 1882, which were subsequently published under the title *India what can it teach us?* had one underlying purpose, namely to convince the audience, which were mostly candidates of the Indian Civil Service, of the harm done by unfair derogatory generalizations about the so-called Hindu character. Nothing had been more harmful to British rule than James Mill's *History of British India,* and nothing could be more damaging than to continue to harbour such nonsensical ideas as those on the untrustworthiness and baseness of the Hindu character. The men who were going to rule India should, for their own sake, abandon such vicious prejudices; in his own words: "Certainly I can imagine nothing more mischievous, more dangerous, more fatal to the permanence of English rule in India, than for the young civil servants to go to that country with the idea that it is a sink of moral depravity, an ant's nest of lies."[16] But it was not from a utilitarian consideration alone that Max Mueller attacked the creation and the maintenance of such prejudices. He was opposed to them from a moral and humanitarian viewpoint, when he spoke: "What I should wish to impress on those who will soon find themselves the rulers of millions of human beings in India, is the duty to shake off national prejudices, which are apt to degenerate into a kind of madness."[17] Max Mueller hoped that eventually a more healthy attitude would prevail amongst the British rulers. H. T. Colebrooke had set a good example. He had been "warm with indignation at the folly and injustice of the policy carried out by England with regard to her Indian subjects." Colebrooke had further wished, at a rather early time, that India should become an integral portion of the British Empire. She should not any more be treated as a mere appendage, which yielded a large revenue, and nothing more.[18] Max Mueller appealed to the English not to treat the Indians as "born enemies or conspirators to be kept under by force, but as loyal subjects to be trusted."[19]

Max Mueller shared the view of many Indian reform-politicians of his days by declaring himself to be a follower of the Ripon-Gladstone School. He expected a better spirit to grow up in India through a closer contact between the official sector and the wider public.[20] Max Mueller's criticisms and admonitions were all but music in the ears of those concerned with the administration of India. It is little surprising that Lord Salisbury and his colleagues were disinclined to follow Queen Victoria's recommendation and bestow on Max Mueller an order for his services towards the Indian Empire.[21] When a few years later Max Mueller was made a Privy Councillor, he was honoured rather for his scholarly work in general than for his merits towards India in particular.[22] Max Mueller believed firmly in India's inherent powers for a cultural, religious and social regeneration. He recognized the importance of the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and Ramakrishna's teachings as expressions of a change that was to affect and modernize the whole of Indian life. He interpreted those movements rather early as a "rising of a national spirit."[23] In spite of his great interest in the religious reform movements in modern India, Max Mueller did not identify himself with the aims of one group or the other. He was most sympathetic with the Brahmo Samaj, and friendly to both its sects. P. C. Mozoomdar, who was highly respected by him—even more than his spiritual *guru*, Keshub Chunder Sen[24]—did not find Max Mueller more sympathetic with their sect than with Debendranath Tagore's. He judged that the Oxford Professor's relations with the Brahmo Samaj was simply that of a scholar and a critic, and nothing more.[25] If Max Mueller severely criticized Dayanand Saraswati, it was less for the latter's creation of the *Arya Samaj*, than for the most uncritical evaluation of India's past. Max Mueller spoke as a scholar of Ancient India, when he condemned Dayanand's ideas on a highly technical civilization in Ancient India, which compared favourably to the modern age.

The influence which Max Mueller exercised on the minds of the leading Indian intellectuals of his time, and the authority which he wielded all over India during those decades of the so-called Indian Renaissance, can hardly be exaggerated. Behramji M. Malabari described Max Mueller's eminent position in these terms : "Hindu politicians regard Max Mueller as one of their wisest and safest guides. Hindu reformers consider him their final court of appeal."[26]

Many, who came to England, went to see Max Mueller in Oxford, and whoever knocked at his door, was welcome. Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar, who visited Max Mueller, described his home in these terms : "That shady house at 7, Norham Gardens, was a place of universal pilgrimage to all visitors from the East who travelled to England for study, or business, or pleasure . . ."[27]

Except Rammohan Roy's tomb, there was no other place in England as dear to Indians in those days as Max Mueller's home. What a visit to Max Mueller's place actually meant to Indians can be guessed from the exuberant words of Vivekananda who visited the German savant at Oxford : "What an extraordinary man is Professor Max Mueller ! I paid a visit to him a few days ago. I should say that I went to pay my respects to him, for whoever loves Sri Ramkrishna, whatever his or her sect or creed or nationality, my visit to that person I hold as a pilgrimage." Swami Vivekananda continued: "And what love does he bear towards India! I wish I had a hundredth part of that love for my own motherland!"[23]

A visit to Max Mueller worked always as an encouragement coupled with inspiration for Indians who were struggling for their country in the religious, social and political spheres. The Oxford Professor's home was a place where Indians could discuss their desires for self-governing institutions. It was a neutral meeting ground where Englishmen and Indians could meet and speak in a cordial manner respecting each other's point of view. Plans were discussed and courses of action premeditated that were to be pursued by Indian nationalists, as one, who remained anonymous, experienced: "It was from Max Mueller's at Oxford that I was induced to write a letter to *The Times,* venturing to accept what little Lord Cross was prepared to give towards the enlargement of the scope of Legislative Councils in India. We were discussing the proposals of the Government of India when Hunter or some other friend suggested this course."[29]

Max Mueller kept himself abreast with developments in India and their interpretations from an Indian point of view, not only by inviting Indian reformers to his place, but also by an extensive correspondence with the intellectual leaders in India. The most illustrative letter which he received is no doubt that written by Kashinath Trimbak Telang, who described to him in 1885 the difficulties in India and the enormous burden of work that lay on the shoulders of the leaders in those early days of the National Movement.[30]

In a letter to Gladstone he commented in these terms on the work of Keshub Chunder Sen and P. C. Mozoomdar: ". . . they are working in the right direction, and it is a pleasure to help them ploughing, sowing and watering, though we can never hope to see the harvest."[31] What Max Mueller learnt by way of meeting Indian leaders or by corresponding with them, was conveyed by him through various channels to the leading British statesmen of the time. Pratap Chunder

Mozoomdar, who met the Oxford Professor personally, related to us that one of Max Mueller's channels of influencing British statesmen concerned with India was Benjamin Jowett, who gave important advice to Lord Lansdowne on questions of British policy in India.[32] Another and the most important channel was his friendship to W. E. Gladstone. Whenever there was a chance, Max Mueller communicated his views on India and British imperial policy to his English friend, and, for his Indian friends, he arranged meetings with Gladstone.[33]

Occasionally, Max Mueller utilized his acquaintance with the royal court in England to help his Indian friends. Thus, he sent a memorandum to Queen Victoria, describing the miserable condition of child-widows in India by referring particularly to the case of Rukhmabhai. He asked for the Queen's support to alleviate the poor Indian widows' misery. The Women's Fund should make money available if possible.[34]

Max Mueller took a very lively interest in the political movement in India ; he watched closely the politics of the National Congress. Whenever he spoke or wrote on it, he made it clear that his sympathies were with the ruled and not with the rulers. In 1892, he wrote to G. N. Gupta : "The Indian Council Bill is at least one step in the right direction, and the Indian National Congress should express its satisfaction at having carried this important point. As to the letter of your Censor in the *Times*, surely it does not deserve the honour of reply. The present Bengalis can well afford to ignore such flea-bites. Certain insects are not worth powder and shot, they cannot be killed in that way, nor by facts or arguments." Max Mueller continued : "You will have to reconsider your taxation ; to have a tax on salt for instance, has been considered in the whole history of the world a disgrace to any civilized country." And he concluded : "Any how, I congratulate you on the first step though I wish the elections could have been introduced to some responsible bodies, outside the Government. I shall not live to see a Parliament in Calcutta. One thing, I know, it would be as loyal as the Parliament in Westminster, more loyal than a Parliament at Dublin."[35]

As Max Mueller's hopes of an Indian Parliament during the British rule were never fully realized, his judgment of its loyalty remained entirely hypothetical. Although he went very far in his support of Indian nationalist aims, he did not go beyond a certain limit. He stopped, where most of the contemporary Indian politicians also stopped: at the threshold of Home Rule. In a letter to Malabari, dated 25 August 1893, he stated his position in unmistakable terms: "I have all my life been an Indian reformer, though there are some reforms of which I do not approve. I have all my life been a liberal and a Gladstonian, but I do not approve of Home Rule."[36] The best way to give Indians voice and vote in the Government of their country, could, in his opinion, be best achieved by their representation in the British Parliament. When Lalmohan Ghose tried—though unsuccessfully—to get into the House of Commons, he was fully supported by Max Mueller as well as John Bright, who did all they could do to help his election.[37]

Max Mueller's last service to the nationalist movement in India was his intervention on behalf of B. G. Tilak, the great political leader, from Maharashtra, who had been sentenced with 18 months rigorous imprisonment for his alleged involvement in the Rand-murder case. Max Mueller drew up a petition to Queen Victoria, which was signed also by R. C. Dutt, Dadabhai Naoroji, W. W. Hunter, and others. Tilak commented in his obituary article of Max Mueller on this petition: "Nor can a native of India be possibly unalive to the influence which the deceased Professor has all along exerted in making the British people regard the Indian people with far greater respect than they would have done otherwise. It is a mere detail but pregnant with significance that he lent his signature to be the first on a petition which was presented to the Queen on behalf of Mr. Tilak, while he was in prison, and which was mainly instrumental in securing his release six months before the end of his term. Here, we may be sure that he did not care one way or the other for the politics which brought about Mr. Tilak's incarceration. But the thought of an oriental scholar, and a gentleman toiling in prison was a thought unbearable to him; and we have all seen how this intercession had the effect of pouring oil on the troubled waters of both Native and Anglo-Indian [i.e. British-Indian] feeling."[38] One cannot follow Tilak entirely in such a reasoning; for, Max Mueller was quite aware of Tilak's position in the National Movement, and he certainly took that into consideration when petitioning for his release. If, however, Max Mueller did not stress this fact then or later, it was purely for reasons of expediency: to get somebody out of the claws of a lion, it is not advisable to provoke the animal; to flatter and caress it, seems more politic. In our case: Max Mueller's disregard of Tilak's quality as a national leader was merely to serve as sugar-cane to the British.

India's cultural renaissance during the 19th century, which was stimulated largely by Western Indology,[39] found its most ardent supporter, if not promoter, on European soil in Max Mueller. The religious and literary movements of modern India were interpreted by him as signs of the awakening of India. Yet, he discovered in those movements India's past and tradition and her national characteristics. Ramakrishna and his teachings were interpreted by Max Mueller as modern embodiments of that ancient and national spirit of India, which he had attempted to discover ever since the beginning of his academic career. The slow emergence of the "real India", as he called it, meaning by it the re-discovery of the ancient treasures of Indian literature and philosophy, was for him "a far greater discovery than that of Vasco da Gama's."[40] Max Mueller's studies of ancient and modern India were not only inspired by the ideas and ideals of modern India; he himself became a source of inspiration for many Indians standing in the forefront of the National Movement, intellectually and politically. He inspired his Indian contemporaries with hope for the future and pride of the past, and tried to show to his English contemporaries the former and present greatness of India. "What I feel", he wrote in 1899, "and what I wish my friends would feel with me, is that a country which, even in these unheroic days, could produce a Rammohan Roy, a Keshub Chunder Sen, Malabari, and a Ramabai, is not a decadent country, but may look forward to a bright, sunny future, as it can look back with satisfaction and even pride on four thousand years of a not inglorious history."[41]

What Max Mueller really was to his Indian contemporaries, was best expressed by Romesh Chunder Dutt, who spoke on the occasion of the scholar's death to the English Goethe Society thus: "I do not exaggerate facts . . . when I state, that for a period of half a century, my countrymen have looked upon Professor Max Mueller, not only as the best interpreter of ancient Indian literature, but also as the truest friend of modern India."[42]

Max Mueller's death was mourned all over India.[43] Soon after he had died, Indian politics assumed a more violent character.

2. *German and English Politics*

Throughout his life, Max Mueller had a particular liking for the smaller German states, an inclination which he developed in his early youth at Dessau. Living in England since his 24th year of age, he looked back to those days nostalgicly like Prince Albert, whose family ruled Saxe-Coburg Gotha, one of the medium-sized German states. Their common love of the German duchies was probably the basis of the excellent relations that Max Mueller always entertained with both Prince Albert and Queen Victoria.

The enormous richness and variety of German cultural life was attributed by Max Mueller to the existence of many principalities, although he admitted that through their very existence, Germany had ever remained a politically powerless country.[44] "What would Germany have been", he asked, "without her small courts? Without a Duke Charles August of

Weimar there would probably have been no Wieland, no Herder, no Goethe and no Schiller".[45] In other words, Germany's political weakness had been her cultural strength.

The similarity of such an image of the old Germany with that of India is quite striking. The strength of India in ancient times had been her entire absorption in philosophical and religious problems and a total absence of politics and of a national feeling. However wrong such an assumption was—the discovery of *Arthasastra* a few years after his death was the final blow to this 19th century cliche concept of ancient India[46]—the fact remains that Max Mueller was convinced of a relationship, or rather interconnection, between politics and cultural activity. Politics could hamper as well as foster the intellectual life of a country, and the worlds of arts and science had their effects upon political affairs.

As much as he felt attached to the smaller states in Germany for cultural reasons, politically he became an ardent supporter of a united, but liberal Germany during his student years at Leipzig and Berlin. When the German Revolution of 1848 broke out, he had just embarked on his edition of the Rigveda in England. By that time he felt more like a scholar who wanted to work in peace than a political radical whose aim was to change politics in his country. Still, he followed with attention and emotion the events in his home-country.[47] The failure of the 1848 Revolution was a great disappointment for Max Mueller as for all his liberal friends in Germany and abroad. He condemned the faint-heartedness of the German rulers relentlessly: "I trusted our kings as having a more upright judgment and higher desires, more love for their people, a more self-sacrificing spirit. Instead of this, everywhere, cowardice or miserable blindness and self-confidence."[48]

The fate of the Schleswig-Holsteiners in particular roused his sympathies. The German population of Schleswig-Holstein had risen in 1848, in order to shake off Danish rule and thereby to terminate the oppressive policy of the Danes against the German language and culture in Schleswig. When the Schleswig-Holsteiners were finally left to their own fate—due to pressure which the Great European Powers, England and Russia, exercised on Prussia—, Max Mueller was deeply shocked. He wrote to his friend Baron Bunsen, the Prussian ambassador in London: "God may help Schleswig-Holstein, and not punish the Prussians in his anger" ![49]

When Bismarck set out in 1863/64 to settle the Schleswig-Holstein Question, Max Mueller, in spite of his condemnation of the Prussian Prime Minister's anti-liberal policy, became his close ally in English quarters. With all possible means of persuasion, by appeals to reason and emotion, in writings, discussions and speeches, did he try to bring about a change of attitude in the British public and politicians, who were notably pro-Danish. One of the few persons who shared his sympathies for the Schleswig-Holsteiners was Queen Victoria, who mourned the death of the Prince Consort by making the latter's former opinions her sacred guide in German politics. And, although it is not correct to attribute Britain's abstentious policy mainly to the Queen, there is no doubt that her attitude provided the backbone for the peace party in Lord Palmerston's cabinet.[50]

The queen, impatient with Palmerston, who tried to convince his cabinet in the early days of January 1864 that Great Britain ought to intervene on behalf of Denmark against the German Powers, wanted to keep peace with Germany by all means. In the very critical days of January 1864, she invited Max Mueller to deliver to her and her family a course of lectures on the Science of Language at her court. As has been mentioned in another context, we may be sure that in doing so Queen Victoria was not merely motivated by a love of comparative philology to invite the German savant and to have this minor political or cultural event publicised in the Court Circular. The invitation of Max Mueller was to demonstrate her sympathies towards Germany and her love of peace. To invite Max Mueller, whose popularity was soaring high and whose political honesty was beyond doubt, was a very wise move, showing clearly where her sympathies lay without offending her ministers. Queen Victoria's regard for Max Mueller had a sentimental reason: he had been introduced to the court by his friend Baron Bunsen, the scholarly and Prussian ambassador, who had also been a great friend of Prince Albert. Max Mueller was for the Queen a link of memory to her dead husband.

Through articles in *The Times,* in dicussions with Gladstone, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Palmerston's cabinet, and with a lengthy essay "On the Language and Poetry of Schleswig-Holstein", Max Mueller explained the German stand in the Dano-German conflict, by which he hoped to rally British sympathies for the Schleswig-Holsteiners. His essay "On the Language and Poetry of Schleswig-Holstein",[51] published in 1864, was a well devised means of persuasion: drawing on his scholarly researches on literature and philology and appealing to English sentiments, it had an entirely political purpose. Realizing that though much had been written on the Schleswig-Holstein-Question, very little was known of those who were actually concerned, namely the Schleswig-Holsteiners themselves. If, for one reason or other, the actual acquaintance with a foreign people was impossible, there was only one way to get an insight into the life, habits and thought of the foreign nation: and that was by a study of that nation's language and literature.[52] It may incidentally be remarked that Max Mueller felt similarly with regard to India. By way of a study of Indian languages and literature he hoped to gain an insight into the Indian nation.

In describing the characteristics of the Schleswig-Holsteiners, Max Mueller employed emotional and rational devices of persuasion. By alluding to their sea-faring spirit and their drinking habits, resembling those of the English, he tried to rouse sympathy for the Schleswig-Holsteiners, who inhabited those regions, wherefrom the Anglo-Saxons had come.[53] The greater part of the essay is a description of the work of Klaus Groth. The translations of several poems of the latter reveal Max Mueller's poetic gifts and his marvellous command of the English language. Whether Max Mueller's article was successful in influencing public opinion, one way or another, is, of course, impossible to discover. Britain anyway, did not rush into war against the Schleswig-Holsteiners and the German Powers.

When the Dano-German War broke out in February 1864, the English public was, with its majority, pro-Danish. From a fear that England might eventually drift into war against the German Powers, Max Mueller wrote the article "A German plea for Germany", which was published on 18 February in *The Times.* He put all the blame for the trouble on Denmark which had violated the London Treaty of 1852. But should the cause of the trouble be removed, then an alliance could be formed between the English, the Germans, and the Scandinavians, which would be "resting on a community of Teutonic blood, cemented by a common love of political freedom, and hallowed by the blessings of the same pure Protestant religion". An alliance of these three North-European nations would be a bulwark against ambitious conquerors from the West and East of the continent, by which he was thinking of France and Russia. *The Times* commented on this letter of Max Mueller on the same day when it was published, and remarked ironically that there was much in such sentiments to which all could respond, yet, no commonness in blood or political ideals, nor in religion could wipe out the English sense of justice! Asked, why he had not at all alluded to the argument that the Schleswig-Holsteiners had been maltreated by the Danish Government, Max Mueller replied in a second letter to *The Times* on 29 February 1864: "Do you think that I do not share in the feelings of the Schleswig-Holsteiners for their insulted language (call it dictionary if you like, I call it a sacred heirloom), their insulted nationality, their insulted sense of justice?" The sufferings of the Schleswig-Holstein people had had better sponsors than him. The attack of *The Times* on the lack of liberalism in Government policies in the German states, particularly in Prussia, did not perturb Max Mueller, who replied: "I blush for Germany, when I think of the men by whom she allows herself to be governed; but I do not despair of my country." And he also entreated the English: "Do not despair of Germany!"

Max Mueller's approach to political matters was alike, whether it was an Indian or a European question. He did not only try to influence public opinion in England by resorting to publications in the press, but also by explaining the course that he supported—as that of the Indian reformers or that of the Schleswig-Holsteiners—to W. E. Gladstone, with whom he shared the liberal outlook, and the interest in philology. The friendship that sprang up between him and Gladstone gave some weight to his opinion. But even before this, in 1864, Gladstone, who was the leader of the so-called peace-group in the cabinet, which was opposed to Lord Palmerston's wish for an intervention on the side of Denmark, consulted Max Mueller on his opinion in the Dano-German War.[54] We do not know about the discussion between the two. There is no doubt, that Gladstone's stand against Lord Palmerston's sabre rattling stiffened considerably in those weeks.

Like all liberals in Germany and Queen Victoria in England, Max Mueller had wished Schleswig-Holstein to become a separate state in Germany. Instead, it was incorporated into Prussia. What is really surprising in Max Mueller's attitude is, that he overcame his initial aversion against this annexationist policy of Bismarck. Why did Max Mueller, one must ask, yield his position without the faintest attempt to protest, when faced with "stronger bayonets"? The answer to this question may be found in a letter which he wrote to his mother on 16 July 1866: "I expected that Prussia would meet with some defeat, and that may still happen, and would do Prussia good, as thereby she would become more thoroughly German; but these things are not in our hand, *and all happens as is for the best*".[55] This is, indeed, a clue to his basic political attitude as to his psychological set-up. His confession amounts to the view that there was in his eyes only one possible course that history could take: the best one—best with regard to all mankind. In the particular instance mentioned, he actually abandoned his former attitude when events in Germany took a turn which he had not desired. The very reason for such a sudden and surprising change might be found in his lack of a sense of tragedy. He trusted in the "eternal goodness" of all historical development, and had no eyes for those historical decisions and circumstances that decided the fate of whole nations for good or for bad.

This explanation does not explain all, for, he was not a pure evolutionist, as his later attitude towards Germany's interior development and the course of Anglo-German relations reveal. In his attitude towards Bismarck's policy, Max Mueller was torn into different directions, as many of his contemporary liberal countrymen were. On the one hand, he abhorred the anti-liberal measures of the Prussian statesmen, and on the other, he favoured Bismarck's policy of unification for reasons of European security: it strengthened Germany against any threats from Russia and France.[56]

In spite of his belief in the ultimate justice of the course of history, Max Mueller did not remain an uncritical observer of events in Schleswig-Holstein after its incorporation into Prussia. As much as he favoured the complete separation of the Duchies from Denmark, as much did he dislike the Prussian efforts to Germanize the Danish minority in the North of Schleswig. In a controversy with Theodor Mommsen on British policy in South Africa, he alluded to his misgivings on Prussia's policy against minorities, by comparing it with the unjust colonial policy of the British. He wrote that he entirely agreed with Mommsen who reminded his German fellow-countrymen to think of the Poles and Danes, when they started to condemn British policy towards the Irish, the Boers, the Indians and the Egyptians ![57]

During the Franco-German War in 1870/71, Max Mueller was even more active, and probably more successful, in influencing British public opinion. His famous letters to *The Times* were a means to calm down the temperamental outbreaks of indignation in the British press on Bismarck's policy. Max Mueller's utterances were charged with a sense of nationalism that was hardly expected from the German Professor at Oxford. His words abound in pride on Germany's newly attained national unity: "Count Bismarck, in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs for Germany, seems to me simply blameless. He has achieved a noble work, the greatest work in the history of the nineteenth century: He has given back Germany to Europe. Germany may still be beaten, she may be conquered and dismembered again, she may share the fate of Poland, for the counsels of God are inscrutable; but the Germans, depend upon it, will now conquer or die together, and, whatever may befall, they will never forget what they owe to Count Bismarck who has proved himself more than the Cavour of Germany."[58]

His many letters written during the Franco-German War to his friend Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, were all designed to explain and justify Bismarck's policy with arguments that were bound to impress an English liberal. He wrote as a German, but with strong affections for England, and, whenever with a prejudice, only with a bias for England. As Max Mueller was in touch also with Abeken, Bismarck's Secretary, he could function as a sort of "unofficial diplomatic channel" between Gladstone and Bismarck.[59] Through this channel, Abeken's and Bismarck's misgivings about the disinclinations of the inhabitants of Alsace Lorraine to be rejoined to Germany became known to Gladstone.[60]

At the request of Gladstone, Max Mueller sent to Bismarck a pamphlet by Gasparin proposing to have the neutrality of Alsace guaranteed by the Great Powers of Europe, as there were serious consequences to come if Germany seized that territory from France on her own conditions.[61] Max Mueller's communication, however, did not yield any result. Although Gladstone had not been every hopeful in this endeavour he was, nevertheless, disappointed: "I cannot wonder that your communication of the Gasparin pamphlet produced no fruit. For the policy studiously pursued by Count Bismarck has been to shut out all foreign interference or even suggestion as to the peace. I do not question his title to act for himself in this manner. We neutrals need not acquiesce in it unless they please; but apparently they will or may please. I am afraid the result will be, that Germany, crowned with glory and confident in her strength, will start on her new career to encounter the difficulties of the future without the sympathies of Europe: which in my opinion no nation, not even we in our sea-girt-spot, can afford to lose."[62]

Gladstone was partly Max Mueller's political ally, with whom he shared the liberal outlook, and partly his contestant: Gladstone representing British opinion, and Max Mueller speaking in defence of German policy. On 22 December 1870 Max Mueller wrote to his friend Klaus Groth on his contest with Gladstone: "I had to fight a lot in English newspapers—I hope it is over now. My contestant was Gladstone, the Prime Minister—we have parted as friends . . ."[63]

During the War of 1870/71, Max Mueller was able to rouse English sympathies for the German case, and this, one must stress, in spite of a not too favourable atmosphere in Britain. He scored a great success in a collection of gifts for German war invalids, which he organized in and around Oxford. Judging from the amount collected, the Germans seemed to be more popular than the French, for whom the Duke of Marlborough had organized a similar collection.[64] Max Mueller's success was due only to his own popularity, for Bismarck's policy was watched with suspicion and dismay.[65]

In spite of a certain pride in Germany's political rise, Max Mueller had not lost his critical, or rather sceptical, attitude towards the internal situation of his home-country. Amidst jubilations over the German victory, he wrote in a remarkable letter to the German poet Klaus Groth: "I knew that both of us thought and felt the same way about the greatness of our time. The dark side of the picture is, however, dreadful, and it is difficult to maintain one's belief in the higher destiny of man. The atmosphere in Germany is also depressing and oppressive—the great task has been completed, but who can be happy about the work? May peace bestow courage and strength on the people to achieve that which we need above all—real political life and not a dictatorship. How advanced is England in this respect, how much we have to learn from the English!"[66]

Max Mueller explained German demands in connexion with Alsace-Lorraine as expressions of a nation "flushed with victory and crushed with grief", which could not be in its right mind."[67] He shared the view of the German liberals as well as many an Englishman, when he condemned Bismarck's early unconstitutional manipulations with the army-budget in 1862.[68] The later development of the Reich did not allay his apprehensions. Overlooking the events in a bird's eye view two years before his death, he judged Bismarck's policy of crushing the liberal opposition in 1862 as "the beginning of the political drama, which ended at Sedan, if indeed it ended then."[69] Bismarck had expressed his disfavour of Max Mueller's critical statement on his anti-liberal policy,[70] but, once he saw that Max Mueller's writings in British newspapers had explained the German position in the Franco-German War and thrown a favourable light on his policy, he expressed his gratitude towards the Oxford Professor.

Max Mueller's strength in explaining German policy to Englishmen was his thorough knowledge of the English political mind, the ideals of the English public, and the principles of British foreign policy. He did not withhold with his apprehensions on Germany's ultimate military strength: "I am not so blind as not to see the eventual dangers of German military supremacy in Europe..." But he did not despair: "Whatever other nations may think of the gigantic power of Germany, the Germans know better."[71]

He hoped that Germany and England would from an alliance, for he held an attack by Russia on Germany as merely a question of time, and he believed that in such an eventuality France would not hesitate to match the opportunity to reverse the results of her defeat. An alliance of Germany and England, was possible if the United States of America were included, as they could form a bridge between the two.[72] An alliance would keep Germany's ambitious neighbours in cheque; then, he believed, "no cock would crow in France, and no bear growl in Russia."[73]

Throughout his fifty and more years' stay in England, he hoped and worked for the development of closer Anglo-German relations which, in his opinion, would exert also a healthy influence on Germany's internal situation and support her in her staggering progress towards a fully developed parliamentary system. An Anglo-German alliance would help to stabilize the European system of powers. His and his liberal friends' hopes were centred on the German Crown Prince Friedrich, a son-in-law of Queen Victoria. Friedrich ruled, however, for 100 days only and was succeeded by the impetuous and authoritarian-minded Wilhelm II in 1888, after which year liberal hopes became more and more utopian. The fear was spreading that Germany's internal policy did not move along the road of liberalism. Besides that, another apprehension grew stronger. It was doubtful, whether Germany would in future remain a country of learning and art or whether she would be driven by purely materialistic desires for money and pleasure, and be motivated by political vanity.[74]

The estrangement between Germany and England seemed to grow ever since the Franco-German War. As early as 1870, Max Mueller communicated his misgivings on the development of Anglo-German relations to Gladstone: "I feel as if two trains, both holding dear friends, had just started, though not in the direction in which I hoped they would have gone."[75]

Max Mueller's belief in a continuous progress of European politics gave way to a scepticism in the later decades of his life. The animosity amongst the different nation-states, and their militant nationalisms, created grave doubts as to the future. "We are living like beasts of prey in prehistoric times. Every man in Europe now is a soldier. It sounds very grand to speak of an armed nation, but the object of human cultivation is security without being eternally ready for war", he wrote to Schloetzer, the German ambassador at the Vatican.[76] "The present state of Europe," he continued, "is a disgrace to us all, and history will condemn the second half of the nineteenth century, more strongly than the times of the Huns and Vandals, unless a knight like Charles the Great appears."[77] In his inaugural address of 1886 to the English Goethe Society, of which he was the first president, Max Mueller deplored the growing deterioration of the political situation in Europe and appealed to his contemporaries to embrace the spirit of Goethe: "And never was there a time when it seemed more necessary that Goethe's spirit should be kept alive among us, whether in Germany or in England, than now when the international relations between the leading countries of Europe have become worse...; when national partisanship threatens to darken all wise counsel and to extinguish all human sympathies,...[78] Max Mueller lived only to see the' growing militaristic and nationalistic spirit in Europe in the second half of the 19th century. Realizing the dangers of the future, he became extremely critical of his times. What would he have said, when he had become a witness of the first half of the 20th century? We can only guess.

An Anglo-German alliance seemed to Max Mueller the only remedy to avoid a conflagration on the European continent. Realizing that all hopeful signs of an Anglo-German co-operation disappeared, he became disappointed and eventually he despaired. To help the development of an understanding between the two nations, meant really working uphill. The experience of the Boer War and the rise of British-German antagonism stimulated him to take to the pen and fight for his convictions, in spite of his deteriorating health. His aim was to interpret British policy to his German countrymen; for he was disappointed to see that the anti-English press in Germany was drawing even former friends of England into its camp. Despite a long illness, from which he was never to recover, he felt called upon to write and express his misgivings over the unfortunate development, and he hoped to be strong enough to sustain those blows which he expected to receive from nationalistic German quarters.

Despite his handicap through his illness, Max Mueller again assumed the position of a spokesman, but this time for Britain, to explain the English stand in the Boer War to the German public. The *Deutsche Revue* published his expose in the beginning of 1900.[79] The main reason why Britain was justified in conducting her politics in South Africa as she did, was, in his eyes, British suzerainty over all territory south of the 25° Southern latitude, as acknowledged by the Congress of Vienna. The editor of the *Deutsche Revue* requested Theodor Mommsen to write a reply to the Oxford Professor.[80] Mommsen saw the conflict between the Boers and the British from a larger historical perspective: "In whatever way light and shadow are divided in the political and military events, here we witness a conflict of two ideologies, the battle is fought, so to say, between the 16th and 20th century."[81]

Although Mommsen criticized British policy in South Africa heavily, he condemned those nationalistic sentiments in Germany that were nothing but blind hatred of the British and enthusiasm for the Boers.[82] Max Mueller replied in another article in the *Deutsche Revue,*[83] by trying to find a common ground with Mommsen even if it were merely the English way: "Let us agree to differ."[84] In assuming that Mommsen had not become a victim of the anti-English feelings in Germany, Max Mueller was no doubt correct. Both the English who regarded Mommsen as having joined the nationalistic section, led by the Pan-Germans, and the Germans who were jubilant that Mommsen had turned a radical nationalist, were wrong. Max Mueller saw clearer. In spite of their differences on certain interpretations of British policy in South Africa, they both had the same opinion on basic points. In a final reply,[85] Mommsen agreed that it was less actual guilt or responsibility that determined or created wars, but the sentiments of the people. Choosing the example of a possible future war between England and Germany, he wrote: "Should it ever come to a real war—which heaven forbid—between our nations [*i.e.* England and Germany] whose fraternization has been demanded justifiably by Max Mueller again and again, then, indeed, nobody will ask about the form of Government of a single district, but only about the sentiments of the inhabitants."[86]

How sensible and moderate Theodor Mommsen's attitude towards England and the Boer War was, Max Mueller was to realize when he was attacked by the Pan-German nationalists. The district board of the Pan-German Society at Leipzig presumed the position of a speaker for all Germany, and accused Max Mueller of an anti-German attitude and announced a most severe sentence. In an open letter, published in the *Lejpziger Neueste Nachrichten,* on 15 April 1900, the *Leipziger* Pan-Germans declared with the usual pathos of those days: "You, Professor, will feel that you have become a stranger amongst us, foreign to our sentiments and thoughts, foreign to our national sense of justice. You will feel that the great mother Germania, whose heart is tied with her warmest love to even the farthest of her sons, has turned away from you, that the table-cloth between you and the nation, in which you were born, has been cut, and *that you have no right any more to call yourself a German.*"[87]

Max Mueller's reply to this undignified attack of the Leipzig Pan-Germans, is typical of the Oxford Professor: it is unemotional, objective and conciliatory in its tone.[88] He ignored the adverse judgment on his German nationality and refuted their colossal attack point by point. His tactics were successful: the Leipzig nationalists left the field of polemics.[89] If Max Mueller replied to the attacks from the Leipzig Pan-Germans, it was only from his attachment to a town, in which he had spent his most formative student years, where he received his doctorate and was finally honoured by a celebration of the 50 years' jubilee of his doctorate. Other, and no less severe attacks on him in the nationalistic German press left him unmoved. It must be stated, however, that there were some sections in Germany which defended his stand and gave him full credit for his honest attempts to work for a better understanding between England and Germany:[90]

The energy of Max Mueller, undermined already before these last efforts to bring home to the German public the lesson that it was better trying to understand the English than antagonizing them, was nearly spent when this war of articles and letters came to an end. Whether his stamina was further weakened by the unfair and inconsiderate attacks on him in the nationalistic German press, is open to reason. It is not doubtful, however, that this experience of outspokenness in an exchange of ideas with his German countrymen was a shock to him. We find him, in the last weeks before his death, a deeply disappointed man. He despaired of his nation, that had given him so much,

Pulling his little strength, that was left, together, he wrote an article a few weeks before his death, and gave it the telling title: "Anti-English feeling among the Germans and its causes." It was, significantly enough, not published in England, nor in Germany but in America, in the New York journal *The Forum* (September 1900). The causes of the ill-feeling between England and Germany were traced back by him to the Dano-German

War of 1864. The German distrust of England had not been removed in spite of Britain's benevolent neutrality in Bismarck's wars of 1866 and 1870/71. Not the German government, but the German public were to be made responsible for the growing antagonism in more recent times. "If the Germans had their own way at present, there would be little doubt that they would rush into war with England. Their newspapers have simply gone mad in their hatred of Britain."[91]

Now, at the end of his life, Max Mueller had lost all hopes of an Anglo-German alliance. In its place he recommended to his American and English readers the foundation of an Anglo-American alliance that could form the uncleus of a liberal world-organization of free nations.[92] Max Mueller's complete disillusion with his nation's development is evident from his readiness to sacrifice liberalism in order to secure peace in the same way as he was ready during Bismarck's early years to set liberalism temporarily aside in order to achieve Germany's unification. Although adverse to any authoritarian system, Max Mueller regarded it as the best safeguard to ensure the maintenance of peace between England and Germany.[93]

He painfully observed, that emotional nationalism of the people and the absolute adherence to liberal principles in politics could be detrimental to peace in the world. "A war of words between the two countries [i.e. England and Germany] seems harmless enough, but a real war would be so terrible that humanity shudders at the very mention of it."[94]

Max Mueller's opinions on actual politics, shaped by the principles of liberalism in the earlier part of his life, were increasingly determined by a psychological approach, which likewise influenced his views on religion and mythology. He held that the forces which made nations friends and enemies were to be found in man's psychological set-up, in sympathies and antipathies. From such a position, he drew the conclusion that politically conscious individuals had to work for friendship and peace among nations. Nations were the sum-total of individuals —a remnant idea of his liberal creed. He postulated that every individual had the duty towards his own nation and the responsibility towards all nations to promote a spirit of good-will. In his last essay, he expressed his belief in individual responsibility as follows: "People do not know how much mischief may be done by a word at random spoken. Every individual German and Englishman ought to know that they may have the destinies of these two great nations in his hand, that he is, in fact, in a certain sense, the representative and ambassador of his country in his own small sphere; but this sphere is sometimes widening and spreading like a circle caused in a lake by the impact of a small stone."[95]

What was true for Anglo-German relations, was equally true for those between India and Europe. Personally, Max Mueller was ever conscious of his exposed position which on account of his academic authority and popularity demanded from him a particular sense of responsibility. Whatever he spoke or wrote was weighed and judged before the tribunal of his political conscience as something that would or could be heard or read in Germany, England and India. There is no instance known that he ever spoke a word rashly that he had to regret afterwards. In the claws of death, Max Mueller realized that his ideal of an Anglo-German cooperation and alliance, for the promotion of which he had struggled throughout his stay in England, had faded away like a phantom. "What splendid days they were", he wrote nostalgicly, "when England went to Germany for her ideals, and Germany came to England for such practical improvements as railways, steamers, men-of-war, gas, electricity and machines of every kind."[96] When Max Mueller died, Germany had just begun to construct her own powerful men-of-war and thus started on a path that eventually led to war between her and England.

The final question to be answered is: Did Max Mueller abandon his national feeling, or even deny his German origin and attachment to his home-country towards the end of his life? His national sentiment can only be evaluated within his outlook on nationalism in general. Max Mueller's attitude towards nationalism was moulded by his early experience during his student-years in Germany, during the experiences in England and by his studies of India's past and present. Throughout his life, he held it a legitimate claim of every nation to achieve unity as well as political and intellectual independence, and a duty of each and every member of a nation to do his best to promote such ends. But nationalism alone would not suffice, it might be even destructive. "National sentiment", he held, "is right and good, but we must not forget that national sentiment is a limited and limiting sentiment . . ."[97] National feeling had to be supplemented by a genuine toleration and appreciation of other nations. Nationalism itself that was narrow, selfish and arrogant, was destructive of all harmony in the world and perturbing the development of humanity into a family of nations. Humanism and a cosmopolitan responsibility were the unquestionable additionals and correctives of nationalism.

Max Mueller protested in strong terms, whenever a whole country was praised or condemned. "It has been my rule through life", he wrote, "never to accept any of these sweeping assertions about a whole nation."[93] Any nationalistic tone in an academic controversy met with his most severe condemnation. When he was attacked by Professor Blackie and accused of a typically German approach to problems of mythology, Max Mueller protested strongly against such an assumed connection between nationality and scholarship. "Nationality, it seems to me", he wrote, "has as little to do with scholarship as with logic. . . . National jealousies and animosities have no place in the republic of letters, which is, and I trust always will be, the true international republic of all friends of work, of order, and of truth."[99] The extreme touchiness of Max Mueller on this point may have a psychological reason. He never forgot his defeat in 1860, in the election to the Boden Professorship of Sanskrit at Oxford University. It is said that, although better qualified than his competitor, he was not elected because of his German origin and of his rather liberal religious outlook.

There was never a moment in his life, in which Max Mueller denied his German origin. In his autobiography, published posthumously, he described his peculiar position thus : ". . . though I had spent nearly a whole life in the service of my adopted country, though my political allegiance was due and was gladly given to England, still I was, and have always remained, a German."[100] Not nationalism but a sense of international responsibility and a desire not to block the way to truth were the characteristic features of Max Mueller's political outlook. He hated wars and wished for a system of nations that ensured permanent peace in the world. An alliance between the Anglo-Saxon and German nations as well as a close link between Europe and India would be ideal means to obtain such an end. All these partners were related to each other by bonds of blood and, what he held in the course of his life as more important, by bonds of language and spirit. The separation of the English and Germans centuries ago, and of the Indians and Europeans millennia ago, had not wiped out their commonness. The will and the effort on all sides could create close contacts again with advantages for all. Oriental scholarship was a means to bridge the gap. It had proved "by irrefragable evidence that the complete break between East and West did not exist from the beginning ; that in prehistoric times language formed really a bond of union between the ancestors of many of the Eastern and Western nations, while more recent discoveries have proved that in historic times also language, which seemed to separate the great nations of antiquity never separated the most important among them so completely as to make all intellectual commerce and exchange between them impossible."[101]

Summing up, one must come to the conclusion that, in spite of his sense of political responsibility, Max Mueller judged politics as a much inferior occupation than an academic activity.

Presenting Gladstone a copy of the "Gifford Lectures" in 1893, he wrote : "It may seem very irrational on my part, not so to say very conceited, to imagine that you could find time to look at any book at present. Still, there are things more important than Ireland, things that appealed to human hearts before the names of England and Ireland were known, and that will continue to appeal to human hearts, long after the name of England and Ireland will be forgotten. Some of these eternal questions I have ventured to treat in my volume."[102]

Only that kind of politics which was connected with the intellectual world appealed to him, as Tilak remarked in his obituary article on Max Mueller.[103] Cultural relations and the exchange of ideas were in Max Mueller's view the best means to develop sympathies amongst different nations and to promote mutual understanding. The awareness that sympathies and antipathies were ultimately decisive for political relations between nations offers an important clue to Max Mueller's basic assumptions. He believed in an inter-connection and inter-action of the political and spiritual, or cultural spheres. He welcomed the foundation of the Goethe Society in England, of which he became the first president, as an event of the utmost significance for Anglo-German relations also in the political field.[104] He was convinced that literature had first an influence upon individuals only. But in the end on whole nations.[105] Similarly, the spreading of oriental studies in Europe were in his view the means to bridge the gap between India and the West by destroying European prejudices against the East.[106] Max Mueller was confident in the working of what he called "spiritual influences", although they worked in a slow and almost imperceptible way.[107]

Max Mueller's political ideas were integrated into his concept of universal history, into his belief in an evolutionary process guided by eternal or divine laws. In the events of contemporary history, he saw the hand of God at work. Germany's victory over France and her unification by Bismarck, were emanations of the "powerful guidance of a divine justice, which reveals itself in the history of nations as well as of individuals."[108] Such a concept led him to accept all historical events during his lifetime as the result of god's decisions.

Basicly Max Mueller was drawn to politics not because he had any personal inclinations of wielding political power, nor because he felt attracted by political tactics, but merely from a humanitarian consideration. He had, already at an early time, gained the insight, that even in academic and intellectual endeavours politics were a strong determining factor. He had to go to Britain for the Rigveda edition, because the Prussian King's budget was too narrow to support him sufficiently; he had to rely on the East India Company's wealth. Furthermore, Max Mueller realized an influence of intellectual trends upon politics, although these were less recognizable and slower in their effects.

Only for this mutual influence of politics and the intellectual sector did he care for politics. His natural temperament was all but inclined to take an active part in the affairs of the world, as he confessed in his *Autobiography* : "I have never done anything ; I have never been a doer, a canvasser, a wire-puller, a manager, in the ordinary sense of these words . . . The only thing of consequence, to my mind, is what we think, what we know, what we believe ![109] If he, in spite of his basic disinclination, did not entirely leave off politics, it might have been for a reason of faith. Max Mueller believed in a divine purpose of history, to which he once gave this classical expression : "Where the Greeks saw barbarians, we see brethren ; were the Greeks saw nations, we see mankind, toiling and suffering, separated by oceans, divided by language, and severed by national enmity,—yet evermore tending, under divine control, towards the fulfilment of that inscrutable purpose for which the world was created, and man placed in it, bearing the image of God."[110] In his incessant efforts to establish and strengthen the ties of friendship among nations, particularly between the peoples of Europe and India, by spreading knowledge of the East in the West and by rousing mutual sympathies, Max Mueller regarded himself as merely instrumental of the divine will in human history. A world free from hatred and devoid of descrimination, a family of nations living together in peace and harmony, was Max Mueller's highest ideal. It was the result of an ingrained spirit of liberalism and tolerance, the impact of half a century's life in a foreign country, and the fruit of a life-long study of the spirit of India in her literature, philosophy and religions.

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CONCLUSION

Max Mueller's Image through the Ages

In the last three decades of the 19th century, Max Mueller was counted among the most famous of his times. His reputation as a scholar was high, his courage in expressing his views on Indian and German politics was notorious. His utterances on politics were read attentively in England, Germany and India ; and there is no doubt that his opinion carried weight. After his death, it seems, that his fame was buried through the developments of the new age beginning with the 20th century. His name was less and less mentioned in Europe. In India, however, it retained its high esteem.

There were plenty obituary notices in Indian papers on Max Mueller's death. On account of the close relationship that had developed between Lokomanya Tilak and Max Mueller, during the late nineties, it is appropriate to draw attention once more to the leading article in Tilak's paper *The Mahratta* "The Late Professor Max Mueller", published on 4 November 1900. Tilak wrote : "This general benefactor of the world had claimed India specially as his own and no ordinary reasons would be enough to wholly account for the love he bore for this country." Tilak denied the deceased a political-mindedness in the ordinary sense. But he conceded to him to have rendered "inestimable" service "in the field of that kind of politics which is concerned with the maintenance of good feelings between different classes of people." This is, of course, the important point : Max Mueller was never a politician, but a political-minded scholar. For a cause that he considered a good one, he threw in all his authority as a scholar publicly as well as with his friends in the highest political quarters. As to his impact on Anglo-German and Anglo-Indian relations, Tilak wrote : "It is well-known how Prof. Max Mueller's presence in England has been a factor in keeping a good understanding between the English and Germans.

Nor can a native of India be possibly unalive to the influence which the deceased Professor has all along exerted in making the British people regard the Indian people with far greater respect than they would have done otherwise." Concluding his article, Tilak wrote the memorable lines: "In him India has lost the warmest friend, the wisest lover, and the most enthusiastic admirer whose place, alas! will be filled we know not when!!" —The words of Tilak have not lost their meaning till today.

In London, Romesh Chunder Dutt paid homage to Max Mueller in an address on the 23rd November 1900 to the English Goethe Society which was a creation of the deceased. R. C. Dutt, who had written different works on Indian history, underlined the merits that Max Mueller had gained by his researches on Ancient India: "The publication of the Rig Veda,... opened a new epoch in historic and religious studies in India, and helped us to turn to the past for inspiration and for guidance in solving the great religious and social problems which lie before us in the path of our future progress."[1] R. C. Dutt, who was one of the foremost leaders in the National Movement of his days—he was President of the Indian National Congress in 1899—, was aware of the influence of Indological research in Europe on the Indian cultural renaissance as well as of the indirect support rendered by European scholars to the formation of a national outlook of the people in India. Max Mueller was respected as one of the great inspirers and guides: "Professor Max Mueller's numerous contributions to the elucidation of the literature, religion, and philosophy of ancient India have helped us in this progress; and his sympathetic works on modern India have inspired us with courage, with confidence, and with hope."[2] The death of Max Mueller was mourned all over India, and many other statements could be quoted to show how grieved the Indian people were. It was felt by everyone that a genuine friend of the country had passed away.

In circles of Sanskrit philologists all over the world, Max Mueller's death left a gap that was felt by most of his contemporaries. Professor Kielhorn, who admitted that he felt unable to judge most of the works of the Oxford Professor, stated, that even if Max Mueller had published no more than the first volume of his Rigveda edition, he would have to be counted amongst the first Sanskritists of the 19th century.[3] Kielhorn regarded as one of Max Mueller's main achievements that he roused a general interest in Ancient India through his essays and through public lectures. He had ever endeavoured to discover matters that were of interest to the public.[4]

The Times, which had opened its columns many times to Max Mueller for nearly fifty years on subjects of German and Indian affairs, devoted to him a long article published on 29th October 1900. It was a tribute by way of a very balanced account of his work and services in England. "We lose in him", *The Times* wrote, "one of the most brilliant and prolific writers of our time; one whose voice has charmed several generations of Englishmen; who was a great scholar, a favourite in society; the friend and intimate of the most distinguished men of his time..." Although many of his theories had not stood the test of times, it had to be admitted that "he was unsurpassed as a scientific expositor, possessing . . . a certain attractive vivacity, a power of breathing human interest into dry bones, a curiously sympathetic intelligence and a rare mixture of the talents of the poet and the savant." *The Times* did not, of course, dwell extensively on his many contributions to Oriental scholarship, but it confessed abundant admiration for his publication of the *Sacred Books of the East:* "What a superb service he rendered to the East and the West by the series 'The Sacred Books of the East'! *Ex oriente lux* is the motto of his collection of the sayings of some of the wisest of the religious teachers of the past; and if Professor Max Mueller had done nothing else but conceived and planned this undertaking the cultivated world would have been his debtor." *The Times* recognized his very sympathetic attitude towards modern India, and her leading reformers "with whom he sympathized so much." As to his position in the academic world of Oxford, *The Times* held that he had attained "a position from the first, an ascendancy at the last, in the life of Oxford which have rarely been accorded to a resident of foreign birth and training." Yet, it admitted, that "in an academical sense he never was quite at home there, and never altogether assimilated that Oxonian way of looking at things which, being indigenous to the place, was perhaps too narrow for so cosmopolitan a scholar." With his death, *The Times* wrote, "Oxford loses one of its chief ornaments."

As has been said before, in the nationalistic quarters of the *Alldeutsche Verband* (Pan-German association) in Germany, Max Mueller was, during the last months of his life, violently attacked because of his "English leanings" in the Boer question, and his loyalty and attachment to his home-country were seriously questioned. How unfounded such accusations were, is not only apparent in Theodor Mommsen's defence of Max Mueller, but also testified by *The Times,* which put on record the English view of his attitude : "There were some who said he never was quite an Englishman. It would be little to his credit if he had been, for to Germany he owed and from Germany he brought that lofty conception of the scholar's life which is none too common in England." The article in *The Times* mourned the death of a great German who had made England his home, but never forgot the country in which he was born.

The death of Max Mueller caused German publicists to reconsider their attitude towards him during the last year of his life. Whereas the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten* stressed his services to both, Germany and England, the *National Zeitung* though claiming him to be a German, could not help remarking that during the last year, political considerations seemed to have estranged him from his native land.[5]

Very sympathetic and full of understanding was the article written by the American A. V. Williams Jackson, "Max Mueller and his work", and published in *The Forum*[6] : "Max Mueller stands to the public, and rightly stands, as the best known name in linguistic studies and in Oriental research." In words, that are full of poetry and not lacking in pathos, this American friend concluded : "And as his striking presence departs from our midst, new light seems to be ushered in from the Orient which he so dearly loved. 'The morn, in russet mantle clad, walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill', for in the East he was at home; and as the majestic figure fades from our vision, though not from our memory, the whispered words of the kneeling Hamlet rise to our lips: 'A worthy pioneer!'."

Though brilliant his star shone in the days of his academic and public activities, his fame was quickly fading in Europe during the years preceding the First World War. Eventually, his name was known to the small circle of Sanskrit scholars and linguists only. The reasons for this development are not difficult to find. They are to be found in the political development of Europe after 1900. Max Mueller had been, throughout his stay in England, an ardent advocate of an Anglo-German alliance. Such an ideal, which had been shared by many of his liberal contemporaries in Germany, had vanished because of the anti-English sentiment pervading the nationalistic German press, and by the growing estrangement between Germany and England caused by British distrust of Germany's bid to sea-power and a "position at the sun".

In the world of nationalistic power politics in the pre-1914 era, there was no room for the humanism and the promotion of an understanding between nations that Max Mueller had striven for. The catastrophe which befell Europe and the world in 1914, buried the political ideals of Max Mueller forever. Max Mueller was a member of that generation in Germany, which had centred all its hopes on the liberal-minded Emperor Friedrich. It was really a "lost generation". Having failed in 1848 to achieve a liberal constitution for a united Germany, it failed a second time in its attempt to attain a constitutional liberalization in the years following Bismarck's unification of the Reich in 1871.

Besides politics that drifted into a direction so much abhorred by Max Mueller, it was the progress in the academic field that turned many of his ideas obsolete. The discoveries in ancient human history which he had hoped to make through the comparative studies of languages, religions, and mythology, had failed to appear. The new sciences, which were developed already during his life-time, archaeology and anthropology, were more direct and effective means of exploring the past. Moreover, the study of Comparative Religions, that he helped to develop, were rapidly losing their importance in the European intellectual world. Darwinian ideas had begun to pervade even political thought in the last decades of the 19th century and dominated European politics at the beginning of the 20th. Max Mueller's religiousness, and idealistic evolutionism let the general public uninterested.

When Lewis Farnell, a scholar of classical languages, wrote his memoirs of his academic life at Oxford, which were published in 1934 under the title *An Oxonian looks back* (London), he devoted some space to the description of Max Mueller's position in the ancient English university during the later years of the 19th century and gave an indication of the influence that the German professor had exercised upon his own stand. Farnell confessed: ". . . of all the scientific Germans that I have met he was perhaps the most refined and attractive; apart from his great philological learning, his father who was a poet had instilled into him a strong literary sense, which saved him from any pedantry."[7] This is partly true—a strong literary sense Max Mueller, no doubt, possessed; but his father was his inspirer only indirectly. He died, when Max Mueller was only 4 years of age. Still, for young Max Mueller his father's poems had ever been a source of inspiration and an example to strive after. Lewis Farnell considered Max Mueller "to belong to the same stratum of mind in Germany as that which had produced Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Niebuhr."

As much as Farnell had been impressed in the early period of his scholarly career by Max Mueller, as quickly did he disentangle himself from that influence, once he discovered that Max Mueller's theories had become obsolete. "I had been reared on his theories about 'Aryan' origins and especially the Greek Olympians", Farnell wrote. "But by the time that my intimacy with him had grown, I had been drawn away, . . . by the study of anthropology and the influence of Andrew Lang, who tilted gaily against Max's 'proud Aryans', and though writing as a light-hearted free-lancer brought serious and damaging criticism to bear on orthodox Max-Muellerism." Max Mueller, he wrote solemnly warned him of the fatal error that he, Farnell, was committing, and pointed with infallible certainty to his own theories and to those of the other Germans belonging to his own school. Max Mueller denounced the use of anthropology as a key to religious problems.[8]

Contrary to his fading memory in Europe, he was ever remembered in India as the German who had offered an immense contribution to India's cultural renaissance. Here it was, that Max Mueller's name was eventually "rediscovered" by his countrymen in 1957. The New Delhi branch of the German Goethe Institute was given the name *Max Mueller Bhavan.* This was a good choice, because Max Mueller was one of the last Germans to embody the ideals of Goethe, the ideals of universal education and of a cosmopolitan outlook in which humanity stood above nation, and humanism was the framework in which nationalism was tolerated. Moreover, Max Mueller carried those ideals abroad—to England—, and strove consciously to put them into practice. He was really the first German who left Germany to serve both, his country and a foreign country, by teaching abroad those subjects and those ideas that could help to promote an understanding and close the gap existing between the nations and arising out of sheer mutual ignorance, which, he feared, might otherwise lead one day to a European and universal catastrophe. Max Mueller was not only a great scholar, but a great humanist, who saw in science and education a means to bring different nations in the world together. Science and knowledge were in his eyes better and more lasting tools than politics ; they formed the basis of the future course of history.

Although he greatly helped to acquaint his English contemporaries with the intellectual and scientific world of

Germany, his endeavours did not prevent the ultimate catastrophe, that befell the world twice in the first half of the 20th century. In the case of India, however, he was successful. There was no other German whose individual efforts did so much to develop those ties that have ever characterized Indo-German relations. The re-publication of the *Sacred Books of the East*, since 1962, which was favoured by Dr. Radhakrishanan's support, is proof of the fact that this work of Max Mueller stood the test of times. The same holds true for the *Rigveda* edition, which was republished by Klaus L. Janert in Benares in 1965. Those two monumental editions are testimonies of a scholar's devotion to work, and of an abundant interest in subjects that were Indian and Asian. They have become a spiritual heritage common to East and West: written in Ancient India and Asia, and discovered by Modern Europe.

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4. Ibidem, p. 5.
5. Report on German newspapers' echo on Max Mueller's death in *The Times*, 30 October 1900.
6. *The Forum*, vol. xxx, September 1900—February 1901. pp. 620-629.
7. L. Farnell, *An Oxonian looks back*, p. 114.
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APPENDIX

No. 1

Max Mueller to Gladstone, 13 July 1883

(Add. Mss. 44251(2))

"I enclose a short article, containing my translation of 'God save the Queen' into Sanskrit. I have not yet published it in India because, before doing this, I wished to submit my handiwork to the few remaining native scholars in India. As soon as I hear that they approve, I shall print it and send it to India, and I hope it may be adopted.

I have many friends among educated natives in India, and they speak and write to me perhaps more freely than to others. Nothing, I may say, has given me so much confidence in the future of India as the thorough appreciation of Lord Ripon's sober government by the people of India. I am not thinking so much now about the so-called Ilbert Bill, as about the preceding years, when I felt very doubtful whether, after the rather Oriental regime of Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon's quiet industry, honesty, and far-seeing statesmanship would be appreciated. I believe there is a strong and general desire in India that Lord Ripon should remain, and great as the sacrifice might be, it would, I believe, not be too great for the interests which are at stake. There is as yet less commotion in India than there would have been if those most concerned had not been convinced that Lord Ripon will never yield to sentimental, not to say, selfish and partisan clamour.

I wish Mr. Mazoomdar, who is now in England, could have seen you. He is Keshub Chunder Sen's right hand, and in intellect and judgment far the stronger of the two, though most loyal to his leader, who is overexcited and occasionally strange in his utterances. Still they are working in the right direction, and it is a pleasure to help them ploughing, sowing, and watering, though we can never hope to see the harvest."

No. 2

Kashinath Trimbak Telang to Max Mueller, 22 April 1885 (Max Mueller Papers, Dep. d. 173, Bodleian Library, Oxford)

". . . While the present situation and prospects of our country and countrymen are such that we have all of us, a large variety of other than professional calls upon our time which we cannot get rid of. For instance, in the political line, we, who have received the benefit of English Education feel it a duty to represent to our rulers our countrymen's views and feeling about the existing administration. Excellent though it is in many respects it goes without saying that it is not perfect, and we have to make representations to the authorities asking for sending improvements . . . On the other hand, it is our duty, of course, to interpret the Government to our countrymen, and this is a task of even greater magnitude and difficulty. In the social department again we have a large number of old customs and fashions now become antiquated and obstacles to progress which we must endeavour to remove. The battle with these is again a work of difficulty, particularly as it has to be done with great tact and delicacy. Educational matters also require an attention. The support of existing institutions and the starting of new ones, the improvement of educational arrangements generally all have to be attended to. Besides all this there is literary work of various kinds—work for the development of the Vernacular specially, but other work as well— . . ."

No. 3

Max Mueller to Sir Henry Ponsonby, 18 July 1887 (Royal Archives Windsor, N. 44)

". . . As I thought there might be danger in delay, I have written down, as well I [sic] as I could, what I wished to place before the Queen about the case of Rukhmabhai and the miserable lot of the so-called child-widows in India.

Of course I quite understand that it may be impossible to devote any portion of the Women's Fund to the object which I suggest. But any expression of sympathy or approval coming from the Queen would be a great help.

However, on this point also I can quite understand that there may be difficulties, and I feel almost certain that the Authorities at the India Office would say No! They always consider that the safest policy.

May I say at the same time how deeply touched I felt by the extreme kindness of the Queen in inviting me to meet the 'resplendent' Indian Princes, and in giving me a new and most precious proof of Her Royal favour."

No. 4

Max Mueller to Gladstone, 28 December 1870

(Add. Mss. 44251(2))

". . . I should have written to you before, but I felt with you the unfortunate character of the Luxembourg complication, and I had not the heart to excuse or defend what had been done without more reliable information. Today, however, I had a letter from Geheimrath Abeken to whom I had written on the subject. He is a man whom I trust—in fact it was very much from seeing him trust Count B. [Bismarck] as he does, that I felt, at all inclined to change my opinion of that extraordinary statesman. I think I told you when I was at Hawarden Castle that Count B. honoured me by his special disfavour, for I had spoken my mind very freely on several occasions with regard to his proceedings in the Prussian Parliament. It is right therefore that I should tell you that Count B. has evidently forgiven or forgotten my freedom of speech, for he has sent me some very flattering messages through Mr. Abeken. I mention that to you partly because a readiness to forgive is an important ingredient in any man's character, partly because it may possibly have some influence in varying my judgment—though I hope not.

First of all, Mr. Abeken was very much pleased to hear that you and Mrs. Gladstone should have remembered his name, and he begs me to tell you that he is deeply touched by the expression of your kind feelings for him.

With regard to Luxembourg he writes: 'I hope the present disappointment in England on account of the steps we have taken about Luxembourg will pass away . . . But not one word has ever been said of a political denunciation of the neutrality of L[uxembourg] we have never had any thoughts about or against L[uxembourg], we only think of our military interests, and of these only in case a necessity should arise.'

This seems satisfactory as far as I can judge. I confess that after Sedan it seemed to me that Luxembourg might remove the difficulty of Lorraine. Luxembourg had belonged to the German Confederation till 1867. The inhabitants have no real nationality: they are Dutch, German, French, or nothing at all. Luxembourg had been given up in order to avoid war with France, war had broken out nevertheless—little blame therefore could attach to the German people if they wished to take back what they had been induced to surrender by what turned out to be a false hope. But I was assured at the time by Mr. Abeken that this was not at all a popular idea in Germany, and that it was not desirable to make peace at the expense of a third party. I confess I still hold my first impression—the only question being whether from a military point of view Luxembourg is an equivalent for Lorraine.

I am grieved, though not surprised at the strong feeling against Germany that is springing up in England, and I expect it will assume practical importance when Parliament meets. I am not so blind as not to see the eventual dangers of German military supremacy in Europe, and the duty of other nations to combine in order to keep it within proper limits. I also admit that the manners of our statesmen and the utterances of our Generals have not been very reassuring. But I wonder at people not seeing that rudeness is here as elsewhere a sign and an involuntary confession of weakness. Whatever other nations may think of the gigantic power of Germany, the Germans know better. They know that their successes in this war have been far greater than they had any reason to expect. Good luck—to speak the language of the world—has been on their side from beginning to end. Who can count on a Leboruf again, or on a Moltke? And yet the efforts on the part of Germany have been more than human nature was meant to bear: such efforts are possible for once, but they cannot be repeated at pleasure. The German heart knows its own bitterness . . . Germany looks very strong just now, but is she really so? Can her strength ever become a menace to Europe? People forget the insecurity of the frontiers of Germany inherent in the central position which she holds in Europe. The friendly relations at present existing between Germany, or rather between Prussia and Russia, are artificial, not organic. Every German soldier is convinced that an attack on the Eastern frontier is only a question of time, that France will seize her opportunity, and that nothing but a strong position in Alsace and Lorraine will then enable Germany to fight both with her right and her left arm. A curious collection of extracts from Russian papers, published in the November number of the 'Preussische Jahrbuecher', deserves notice.

There are but two nations in Europe that really hate war and love peace, England and Germany. They have both got everything they want, nay more than they could expect. If the feeling of brotherhood between these two nations had not been obliterated, the peace of Europe would seem secure. To my mind it is the greatest misfortune for Europe and for the world that envy and hatred have separated Germany and England.

Both nations are to blame. I trace the beginning of the mischief to Lord Palmerston's light hearted policy in the Schleswig-Holstein question—you probably see its causes elsewhere. But whatever the causes, the effects are but too manifest—and who can remove them? During the present generation terror may secure the peace of Europe—but in the future there opens an endless vista of wars between the three races of Europe, the Slavonic, the Teutonic, and the Latin, unless the two great Teutonic nations become one power for defence, not for defiance. The two together could keep the peace of Europe by sea and by land, and without showing any enmity to their neighbours, they could, if united, keep the Slavonic and Latin races within their proper limits. But such a union seems almost Utopian, nearly as much as a union between England and America. Sometimes, however, two elements which will not combine by themselves, are made to combine by the addition of a third element. Might the same experiment answer here? Might not England and America be drawn together through Germany? The German Vote in America is not a first sight very important by itself, but it has hitherto proved most important in keeping the Irish vote in order. It is an intelligent and peaceful Vote, and it retains strong sympathies with the mother country. Might not Germany and England shake hands across America? These are mere dreams, I am afraid, and I cannot say that they are shared by the statesmen of Germany, for statesmen are unfortunately retained by their own country, and the greatest only see that there are higher duties than those towards one's own country. England and Germany will soon have to choose, and this choice will determine the destinies of mankind for centuries to come. If England joins France, Germany will be driven into the arms of Russia. That union will draw Germany down, and it will not elevate Russia. If England joins Germany, the Teutonic break-water will be sufficiently strong against the savagery of the East, and the restless ambition of the West. Europe will then have rest and peace, and the Teutonic race will have fulfilled its noblest work, its divine purpose and mission on earth. Strange to say, in the most important international questions nations act by deputy, and on their leading statesmen rests the whole responsibility of these most momentous decisions.

I know you will forgive me for having spoken so freely, and not think it necessary to send one line in reply to this 'loud-thinking' of mine. I reckon my stay at Hawarden Castle as *nilido notanda lapillo* in the annals of my life in England, and I consider it the greatest privilege to be allowed to you as I have done." . . .

No. 5

Gladstone to Max Mueller, 30 January 1871
(Add. Mss. 44251(2))

". . . I think that your letter is alike noteworthy for its dear intelligence, and for its high and just moral sense. The former is rare enough in the world. The latter in such times and circ[umstance]s as those which have fallen upon Germany, is of necessity much rarer still. I should think it uncertain whether Gasparin's pamphlet has reached Ct. Bismarck : perhaps I should say it is improbable : I wish it could.

You put to me a fair question : C[oul]d Ct. Gasparin persuade the Great Powers to guarantee the neutrality of Alsace, if France and Germany had put the quest[io]n into his hands ?

I will try to give you a fair answer. You will not think it less fair, because it is individual and unofficial : for a man must be a wretch indeed, who could operate, at this most solemn juncture otherwise than from the bottom of his heart . . . I will add a few words. There are some great countries in Europe, whose foreign policy is not yet determined for them in a pacific sense by circ[umstance]s wholly or partly independent of their will. But this, which is one, is not now the only country falling into that category. Italy, for the purposes of this question, is nearly in the same position as England. And Austria is likewise, I conceive, now in the same position, with reference to all questions unless they be Eastern. There is therefore much material to count upon and to work with.

Some of the most excusable errors ever committed have also been the most ruinous in their consequences. Such was, I should say, our going or W[illia]m Pitt's going, to war in 1793. The smallest, in the forum of conscience, they are the greatest in the vast theatre of action. May y[ou]r country, justly indignant, and justly exultant, be preserved from committing one of these errors."

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Pariser Hof, Ems, 27 Jun, 1899.

Dear Curzon,

I have ventured to send you my last book, 'On the Six Systems of Indian Philosophy', not that I think you will find time to look at it, still less have inclination to study it. It is enough that you should see what unexplored or little explored tracts there still are in the literature of India and the strange part is that, while Greek philosophy has vanished from the Areopagus, Indian philosophy still rules at Benares and influences the thoughts of millions in a more or less diluted form. There are followers of the Vedânta and the Sâmkhya philosophies living now, who might have lived exactly as they were two thousand years ago.

I am deeply conscious of the defects of my book, but I thought it might be useful to publish it, even in its imperfect form, in order to show the serious thinkers in India that we do not look down on them, but regard them as our equals, when brought face to face with the great problems of life. What I most respect in them as philosophers, is their perfect honesty in philosophical discussions, particularly when they have to treat problems half religious and half philosophic. For in India also religion is but the highest form of metaphysics in their practical application.

But I must not encroach any more on your time, and I only ask you to accept my book as a small sign of the interest and the admiration with which I have long watched your career, even before you became a Fellow of All Souls and a Viceroy of India.

Believe me

Yours very truly

F. Max Müller

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